36

DC'S ZERO HOUR
WHO LIVES, WHO DIES, AND WHO CHANGES

JACK KIRBY
THE LIFE OF A LEGEND

WIZARD®

AUGUST 1994
NUMBER 36
$3.95 U.S.A.
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THE GUIDE TO COMICS

The Lizard, Spider-Man, Carnage, Venom, Doctor Octopus, The Hobgoblin
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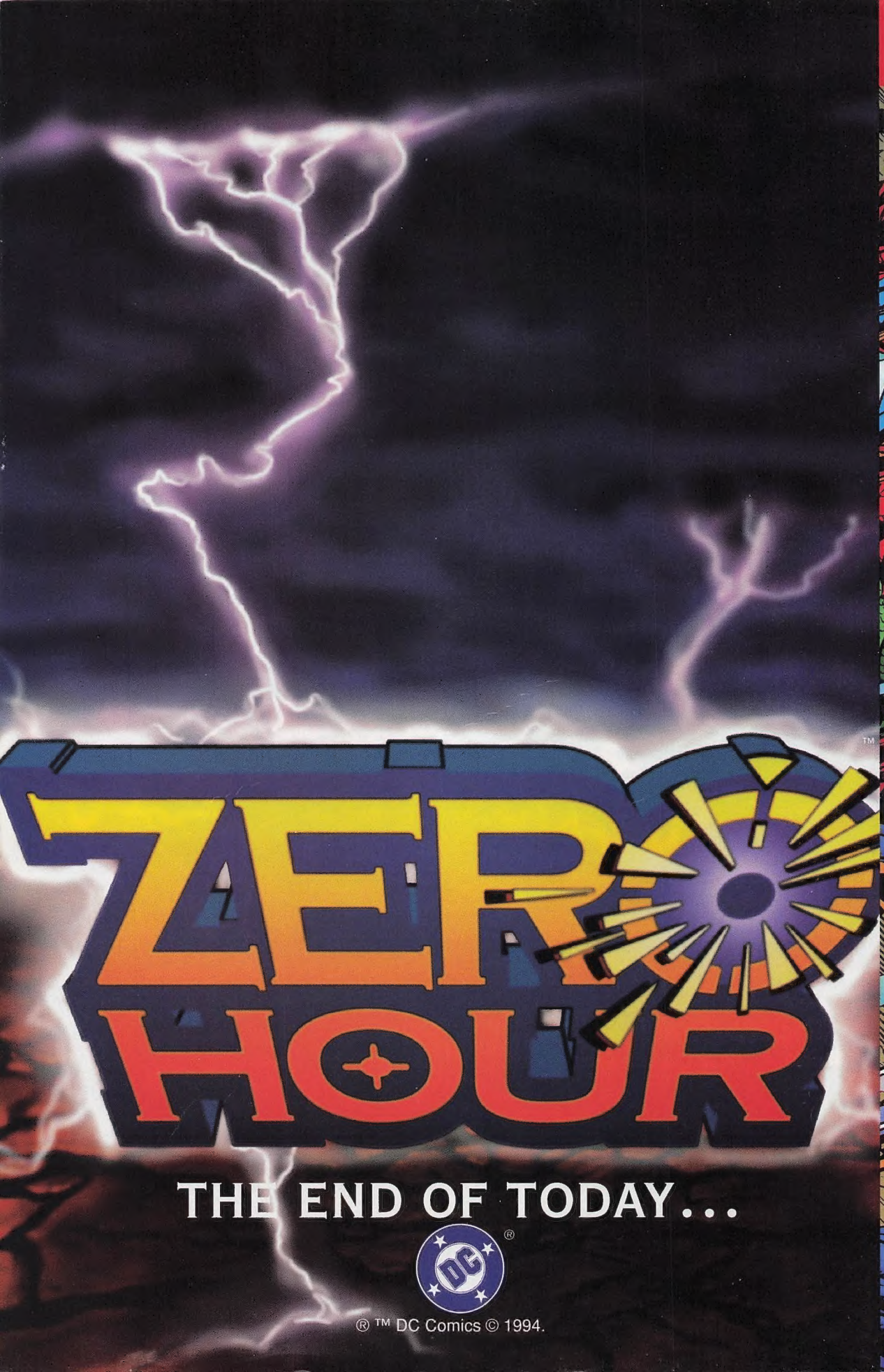
ZERO HOUR
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IT'S SHOCKING.

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PART 3 OF 4: UNCANNY X-MEN #317

PART 4 OF 4: X-MEN #37

FINAL SANCTION

PART 2 OF 2: CABLE #16

LIFE SIGNS

PART 3 OF 3: EXCALIBUR #82

CLANDESTINE #1

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WIZARD®

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August 1994

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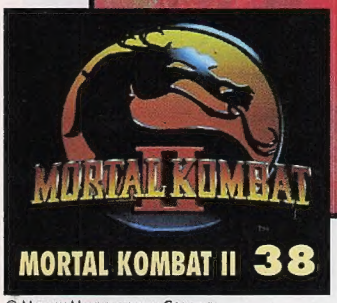

MORTAL KOMBAT II 38

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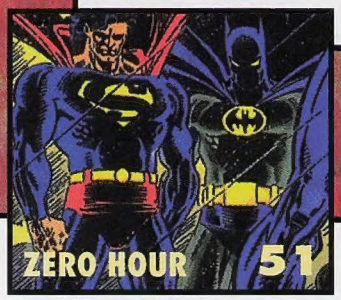

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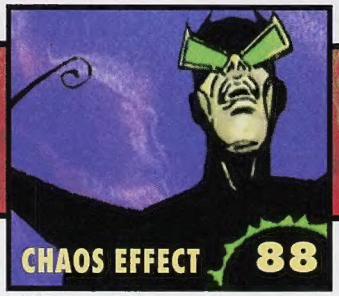

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Spider-Man ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group Inc

ON THE COVER
As if Spider-Man didn't have enough trouble on his hands, now he's two guys?!? Find out all about it on page 30.

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I'D TAKE THE TIME TO EXPLAIN THIS CHAOS THING, BUT I'VE GOT MY HANDS FULL; CHECK OUT PAGE 82.

Dr. Mirage and Carmen ™ & © Voyager Communications Inc.

Hellshock ™ & © Jae Lee

It's a supernatural horror romance comic?!? All we know is, it looks pretty darn cool! See Hellshock *for yourself in the Jae Lee interview on page 76.*

Gee Extant, those are some pretty cool action figures ya got there. Can I play too? Find out who Extant plays with in the "Zero Hour" sandbox and who might get buried on page 40.

Zero Hour and all characters ™ & © DC Comics

A LETTER FROM OUR PUBLISHER

PHOTO: TOP COW PRODUCTIONS. RIPCLAW ™ & © TOP COW PRODUCTIONS INC.

Ripclaw rips one.

Happy Birthday

Three years, 36 issues, and a handful of assorted specials later, *Wizard: The Guide to Comics* has become *the* magazine for comic book fans. I know that sounds kinda pompous, but I'm so darned proud of how *Wizard* has evolved over the past three years, I just can't help it. Input from fans across the country—via mail surveys or chewin' the fat at conventions—has succeeded in making *Wizard* the mag to read. Thanks for getting us here. It's been a great ride, and we've just gotten started!

Speaking of rides, I've been hitting the road to attend retailer shows and meet retailers, publishers, and distributors. I also had the pleasure of meeting fans at WonderCon in Oakland, Calif., this past April 22-24, and I had a great time talking to them. Thanks to my recurring (and embarrassing) photos at the top of this page, fans picked me out of the crowd, and I got to hear even more suggestions on how to add to *Wizard*.

Between shows, I met up with Todd McFarlane and his lovely family at his pad in Portland, Ore. After shootin' the breeze with Todd, I went to Los Angeles to visit Stan Lee. I hadn't seen him in a while, and I wanted to say hi. It's not often that one gets to yap with "The Man," and let me tell ya: some of the stuff Marvel's got cookin' is gonna knock your socks off. You'll get the full skinny on some of those excellent projects in future issues of *Wizard*.

Well, before you dive into *this* issue, let me whet your appetite for next issue's explosive scoops. Aside from sporting a bad(rock) Rob Liefeld Youngblood cover and interview, two of the top artists in the industry today—Joe Quesada and Bart Sears—each sit down for a feature-length interview in which they spill the beans about their upcoming projects. Wanna know what these projects are?

Well...just another reason to see you in 30. (Am I a stinker or what?)

Later.

'94

Gareb S. Shamus

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_._. ....

THE GUIDE WIZARD TO COMICS

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Wearer of the Dress See Bullpen, page 222

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OF
SPIDER-MAN
When Peter Parker was bitten by a radioactive spider, he gained the proportionate strength and agility of the arachnid. But his refusal to use his newfound abilities to help others resulted in the death of his beloved Uncle Ben. Realizing that with great power there must also come great responsibility, Peter vowed to atone for his mistake by using his spiderline abilities to battle evil from that day forward!
SPIDER-MAN
REAL NAME: Peter Parker
GROUP AFFILIATION: None
124
STRENGTH
INTELLIGENCE
FIGHTING ABILITY
POWER RATINGS
WOLVERINE
MARVEL CARDS™
Universe 1994
AUGUST 1994
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Magic Words

People often ask us how many entries we receive for Letter Art, the Drawing Board, and other contests. They also ask us how many letters to the editor we receive. The answer is, in the immortal words of Keith Richards, "Thousands! *Thousands!*" Quite literally: we received over 2,000 letters to the editor for this issue. Yes, indeedy, I read them all, as did my houseboy, P. McCallum. There are two morals to this little story.

First, the numbers are big, but please don't be discouraged by them. Practically everyone states that they want to see their letter or artwork published. But the sheer volume of letters makes that impossible in any month. Keep plugging away; hopefully, sooner or later, something you send in will see print.

Second, please address your mail correctly! If all you send is a Letter Art envelope with no letter, address it to "Letter Art." Price guide questions should go to Market Watchers, Pen Pal listings to Pen Pals, and so on. And please send customer service questions to Customer Service. Our mailroom guy tells me that over 1,000 pieces of mail come into the building daily—address yours properly to increase your chance of getting the desired result.

Oh, yeah: any letters to be considered for publication *must* be signed. You know who I am and what I've got to say, so it's only fair that we know the same about you. No hiding behind anonymity—weak sucks need not apply.

A lot of people asked what happened to "My Kind of Hero." It's been scrapped, largely because it bit ass and drove me bonkers. Plus, reader surveys indicated it was one of the least popular departments.

A special thank you goes this month to Chris Lucero of Clifton, Colo., for a Letter Art entry featuring my second- and third-favorite comic characters: Milk and Cheese, Dairy Products Gone Bad!

Undoubtedly the hottest topic this month (over 200 letters!) was Wolverine and his lack of adamantium. Everybody wants to know what's up with that, and particularly if he'll be getting the metal claws back. Hey, we don't know...yet. Check out *Wizard* #38 for inside info regarding that li'l Wolverine fellow.

On to the letters...

MILK & CHEESE ™ & © EVAN DORKIN

Dear Wizard,

During the "Maximum Carnage" storyline last year, Spider-Man repeatedly let Carnage escape when he could have killed him. Carnage is just going to keep killing people. Spidey wouldn't even let Venom kill Carnage.

I was just wondering if you could tell me why he lets Carnage go, knowing that he'll kill more innocents. I thought Spider-Man was supposed to protect innocents.

Dan Elston
La Vista, NE

Thanks. For the first time in my life, someone has made me feel old. The answer is pretty simple:

Peter Parker doesn't kill people. Peter Parker, the man beneath the red-and-blue long johns, is a guy just like you and me—a normal Joe. Only difference is, this Joe can stick to walls and throw Buicks. But despite all that, Peter Parker has always been an everyman sort of hero, with problems, failings, and foibles very similar to ours. Most of the people you pass on the street are not killers. Neither is Spider-Man.

The reason I suddenly feel old is that I realize that the ideal of the comic book hero has changed significantly since the mid-'70s, when my personal ideal was formed. Twenty years ago, no one would have to ask this question. Ten years ago, Captain America still felt serious remorse over killing Baron Blood—a friggin' vampire, fer cryin' out loud. But thanks to the advent of today's tough-guy, take-no-prisoners hero, today's readers want to know why Spidey didn't do what he "should have done" and killed Carnage. It suddenly seems a legitimate question, and is in fact so pervasive that maybe the whole era will be remembered by it. To wit:

Dear Patrick Daniel O'Neill,

As you requested in *Wizard* #32 ("The Age Problem," The Ed.), I have a name for the

third age of comics and have identified the fourth. The third age can be called the Bronze Age because the other ages are Golden and Silver, and this is the last time we see heroes that resemble the true heroes of comics....

The fourth age, the "Dark Age" of comics, began in May 1991 with the release of *Spawn* #1. Since then, the image of a true hero has been changed for the worse....

[*Spawn*] soon became the best-selling comic in the country. Spawn is, without argument, the most evil, unheroic "hero" to bloody a four-color press. He was a killer in life and [remains one] in death. He is pitiful, weak, distraught, miserable—the very opposite of a real hero....

After Spawn came a series of characters and events that would change the character of comics as we knew it: Image created more violent unheroes, generating huge sales; Superman was killed in an event no better than a Roman gladiator fight; Batman was replaced by Azrael, forever changing the image of Batman; more [imprints], like Ultraverse, sprung up with their own unheroes; Green Lantern destroyed the Guardians and the Corps in a blind rage; Spider-Man went on a quest for revenge and was never the same....

It's not too late to change. If people are offered more heroes in the "classic" style, dark, violent heroes like Spawn and Azrael will lose popularity. If more and more unheroic heroes are created and sold, however, then the idea of a "true" hero will die completely. And then what will be America's definition of "hero"?

Michael Thomas Deely
Elkhart, IN

I'd say *Spawn* #1 is a landmark issue, but for different reasons. Aside from being the book (*Youngblood* #1 aside) that cemented Image's status as a major player in the comic industry, it also showed that the cult of personality in comics had come full circle, and that creators were just as important, if not more so, than their creations. It showed that writers or artists, not just characters, could drive a book's sales to high levels.

And I'd also say that the whole "dark hero" concept really started earlier. The Punisher predates Spawn by several years. But it's an interesting theory. Any others?

Dear Wizard,

I dig your mag, but you have forgotten one important subject. What am I talking about? I am talking about comic strips. Comic strips [were] around for many years before comic books and started the whole trend. You may think this a pretty lame subject, but many comic strips are well-written. I know a lot of people who would love an article about *Calvin & Hobbes* or *The Far Side*. I would like an interview with [*Calvin & Hobbes*'s creator] Bill Watterson because he so superbly portrays the mind of a child in his writing.

Marco Ferretti
Fort Lee, NJ

Sounds like a cool topic to me. Is anyone else out there interested?

Dear Wizard,

I am a 16-year-old sophomore in high school. My favorite thing to do is collect comics. Whenever I ask my mom for a ride to the comic store (which isn't very often), she goes nuts. She says I'm too old to collect comics. I try to explain to her that I enjoy comics and that is why I collect them, but she doesn't get it. Please publish this letter and help me explain to her and other mothers nationwide why I and other kids my age like to collect comics. *Help me!!*

Soren Nash
Great Barrington, MA

OK, mom, have a seat, grab a cup of coffee, and just hear me out for a minute. Fostering the kid's interest in comics just might be a good idea. Some comics are very well-done, literate, educational, and beautiful. And believe it or not, I learned a lot of vocabulary words through comics. Reading anything, comics included, will increase your kid's cultural literacy and help make him a more well-rounded person.

As a hobby, the kid could do a lot worse. Comics are much better than drugs, crochet, or (dare I say it?) the dreaded golf. Plus, if your child becomes interested enough in comics, he may pursue a career with them, get a real job, move out, and never drink milk right out of the container again.

Hug a comic today.

Dear Wizard,

I can't seem to find comics from small publishers in stores. I'm interested in *Cerebus* comics but I don't really know much about the character and I don't want to buy it if it's stupid. Could you tell me about Cerebus and how to get his comics?

Rick Wise
Honeybrook, PA

***Cerebus* has never been my cup of tea, but many people think it's the grooviest thing since sliced bread. It centers around a Conanesque aardvark known as Cerebus and is written on many levels and features a lot more than hacking and slashing. It has humor, satire, and all sorts of good stuff. A good way to find *Cerebus* comics is to ask your local comic store to special order a copy for you. Any comic seller worth his salt will do this; anyone who doesn't is a big fuddy-duddy anyway.**

ILLUSTRATION: DAVID PRAGER

Dear Wizard,

I'm writing to you to complain about Image and Valiant and their *Deathmate* crossover.

Personally, I think the price far outweighed the quality of the comic. The story was not up to par with recent Valiant stories, nor the artwork up to Image quality.

I don't understand why they built it up to be such a historic crossover and then released such disappointing material. Many friends of mine feel the same way.

Joshua Schooping
Maitland, FL

Well, you know what they say: if you combine five gallons of ice cream and five gallons of manure, you get 10 gallons of manure.

ILLUSTRATION: DAVID PRAGER. THE FLAMING CARROT ™ & © BOB BURDEN.

Dear Wizard,

I'm holding the Flaming Carrot hostage! The only way I'll give him back is if you send me a *Flaming Carrot* #6. If you do not do as I request, I will feed him radioactive cucumbers and peel him layer by layer with a dull carrot peeler.... Send the comic to the address below or you will never see your precious Carrot again!!!

John Scrudder
Ocala, FL

Yeah, right. I was just playing whiffleball with the Carrot the other day. He wasn't kidnapped. In fact, he said, "Ut! If Scrudder would try, I'd kick ass!"

Pen Pals

Want to get in touch with your fellow comic fans? Or want them to touch you? Send your name, address, age, gender, and three favorite titles to Pen Pals, c/o Wizard Press, at Magic Words's address on page 18. Hey, make a friend!

Chris Craig
Age: 13 Sex: Male
512 Wolsely St.
Peterborough, Ontario,
Canada K9H 5A6
Likes: *Spider-Man 2099, Avengers W. Coast, Venom*

Stuart Broughton
Age: 25 Sex: Male
P.O. Box 93
Paddington 2021
Australia
Likes: *Spawn; Shade, the Changing Man; The Maxx*

Scarlet Miller
Age: 14 Sex: Female
R #1, Box 374
Doyle, TN 38559
Likes: *New Warriors, X-Force, WildC.A.T.s*

Mike Wheeler
Age: 17 Sex: Male
4330 W. 152
Cleveland, OH 44135
Likes: *Superman, Batman, Spawn*

Dear Wizard,

I have a question that I have been pondering for about a year now. Nobody has been able to give a straight answer, so I thought I'd try you. When Spider-Man wants to web up a supervillain or swing around town, he uses his ring and middle finger to shoot the webbing. So when he balls up his fist to hit somebody or something, why doesn't the webbing splurt everywhere?

Justin Ellis
Woodbridge, VA

The official answer is that Spidey actually has to hit his palm twice in rapid succession to trigger the web flow. He kind of has to double-clutch it, and balling up a fist would be only a single touch. Sounds like a weak answer, but it's the only one we have.

Dear Wizard,

Just wanted you to know how much I and everyone else involved in small press comics appreciated seeing Tom Palmer Jr.'s. two-part article on minicomics ("Minicomics, Maxireads," Palmer's Picks, *Wizard* #32-#33). He did a great job conveying the variety, quality and fun that can be found in the world of small press.

J. Kevin Carrier
Chairman, Small Press Syndicate
Cincinnati, OH

While Palmer's Picks is another consistently low-rated department in reader polls, I think it's the most important thing we do in this magazine. Those of you who don't typically read it should check it out this ish. Huzzah and more minimarshmallows for Tom!

Dear Wizard,

Back in issue #30, Ryan Preece of San Diego asked if there were any manga clubs. I am also interested in Japanese manga and anime. Enclosed are some of the places where others who like "that big-eyed stuff" can write:

AnimEigo
P.O. Box 989
Wilmington, NC 28402-0989
72477.37@compuserve.com

U.S. Renditions/Books Nippan
1123 Dominguez St., Unit K
Carson, CA 90746

Enriko Smith
Dothan, AL

And on that note, and in an effort to answer as many letters as possible, we now launch into Rapid-Fire Q-and-A Dance Party A-Go-Go!

Dear Wizard,

When are they gonna come out with a regular series for Venom?

Josh Perry
St. Charles, MO

The 12th of never. Venom is slated for about a million consecutive mini-series in a row.

Dear Wizard,

When reading *Wizard* #31, I found a mistake in your CBIQ section on page 92. It says there is only one form of Kryptonite. Not true! *Superman* (vol. 1) #157 is the first appearance of gold Kryptonite.

Shane Hutchens
Roanoke, VA

Yeah, but *Superman* (vol. 1) #157 preceded *Superman: The Man of Steel* #1, in which John Byrne was given license to rewrite the Superman mythos as he saw fit. As of this 1986 rewrite, there is only one kind of Kryptonite—green.

Dear Wizard,

1) Is Frank Miller ever going to work on *Deathblow*?

2) When's the *Youngblood* cartoon coming out?

3) Why is Gareb Shamus's nickname "the Big Cheese"?

4) Why are you guys so funny?

5) Who's the best talent in the industry?

Andy Khangsengsing
Concord, CA

1) Oh, geez. I hope not.

2) It's kind of on the shelf. Negotiations with both the network (CBS) and the animation studio

Halloween Costume Contest

Yeah, we know it's only June, but we're not giving you any excuse for not entering the Third Annual *Wizard* Halloween Costume Contest. This year, like every year, the people who mail in the best entries will be eligible to win some excellent prizes. As far as rules go...

1. What we want you to do is dress up as anything, be it a superhero or a science fiction, horror, or cartoon character—*anything*!
2. The actual costume itself *must* be homemade, but you can add store-bought items to accent it. For example, you can't go out and buy a Batman mask and enter as Batman, but you can get a real surfboard and use it as part of your Silver Surfer costume. *Capice*?
3. Photograph yourself in your costume, write your name, full mailing address, and phone number on a small piece of paper, tape it to the back of your photo (don't write on the photo!), and send it to the address below. All photos must be color prints—no Polaroids! We recommend you take multiple shots with multiple poses. Make sure you focus!
4. To be eligible to win, we *must* receive your photo entry by **September 1, 1994.**

Send your entry to:
Costume Contest III
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

The best entries will see print in the pages of *Wizard* #40, on sale in late October.

Don't be shy. If *Wizard* Assistant Editor Brian Cunningham (left) and bestest pal Dean Galgano can dress up like idiots, so can you!

Batman & Robin © & ™ DC Comics

Watch this space for more details about the contest, including the skinny on the prizes!

(Roustabout) proved troublesome. Dave Galvan's Cut & Print column will have more info on the show as it comes.

3) If you ever smelled the guy, you wouldn't have to ask.

4) The legacy of a misspent youth watching way too many episodes of *WKRP in Cincinnati.*

5) Uh, that'd be me.

FANTASTIC FOUR ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

Dear Wizard,

I was wondering how the Fantastic Four got together.

Roger Montaño
Grants, NM

Reed Richards and Ben Grimm went to college together. Reed was this big-brained scientist who wanted nothing more than for good, red-blooded Americans to be the first people in outer space, thus one-upping those godless commies. So in a stunt that completely belied his supposed intelligence, he made this big rocket that he and test-pilot buddy Ben Grimm would take into space. Adding dumbness to stupidity, Reed took along his main squeeze, Sue Storm, and her kid brother, Johnny. Adding idiocy to dumbness and stupidity, they defied NASA orders, snuck on to the rocket in the middle of the night (yeah, that was easy), and away they went. While in space, their rocket was exposed to cosmic rays. They crash landed back onto Earth, mutated, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Dear Wizard,

When you interviewed Stan Lee (Wizard Profile, *Wizard* #29), you said his real name was Stanley Martin Lieber. Is he related to Larry Lieber, with whom Stan works on the Spider-Man comic strip?

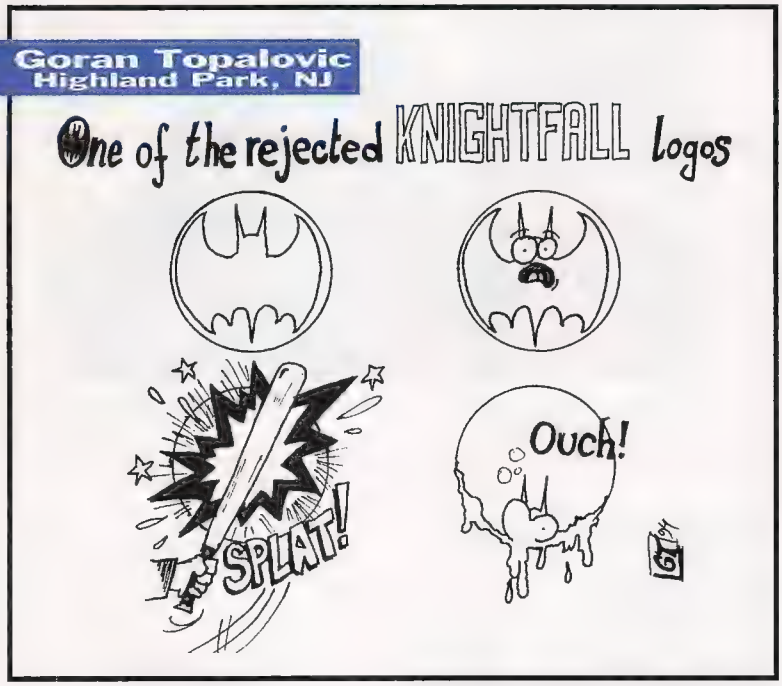
Jonny Malla
Thousand Oaks, CA

They're brothers. Little-known fact: Larry Lieber scripted *Journey into Mystery* #83, the first appearance of the Mighty Thor.

'toons

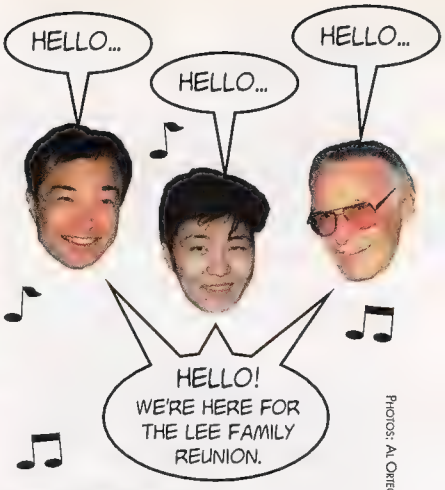
Goran wins a *Sword of Azrael* trade paperback with an original Joe Quesada Azrael sketch and signature inside and a hardcover *Power of Shazam!* with an original Jerry Ordway Shazam sketch and signature inside!

Goran Topalovic
Highland Park, NJ



BAT INSIGNIA ™ & © DC COMICS.

Fans who wish to submit their own cartoons to *Wizard* for possible publication as a 'toon should mail their entries to 'toons, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. Submissions in pencil, neon inks, or metallic inks will not be accepted; submissions in any other medium—crayon, pen, marker, et cetera—are fine. Artwork must not be larger than eight by 11 and a quarter inches. Do not fold, bend, or roll artwork; mail flat to avoid damage. Illustrations may be single or multiple panels. All entries are nonreturnable.



PHOTOS: AL ORTEGA

Dear Wizard,

Are Jae Lee, Stan Lee, and Jim Lee part of the same family?

Yin Ho
Anaheim, CA

No relation.

Dear Gareb,

If Professor X took control of Tony Stark for medical reasons but the armor got stolen and donned by the stretchy corpse of Reed Richards who was in fact possessed by the Ghost Rider who went after Wolverine because he couldn't find Wonder Man...who would win?

Mike Leffel
Norfolk, NE

Uh...right.

VAMPIRELLA ™ & © HARRIS PUBLICATIONS INC.

Dear Wizard Staff,

If you could go out with any comic character, who would it be? I would love to go out with Vampirella!

Jeremy R. Foat
Pell Lake, WI

Hoo, boy. Time to wake up and smell toast, buddy. The correct answer is: none of the above!

Comic characters are not real! They're fictional! You can't go out with them! As much as

Charles L. Greenwell Age: 19 Sex: Male P.O. Box 234 Simpsonville, KY 40067 Likes: All X-titles, all Valiant titles, *Power Pack*	Gene Lawson Age: 13 Sex: Male 1344 Boston Ave. Bay Shore, NY 11706 Likes: *Spawn, The Maxx, Savage Dragon*	Marcia Rider Age: 11 Sex: Female 14 E. Liberty St. St. Johnsville, NY 13452 Likes: *Spawn, Savage Dragon, Ren & Stimpy*	Shawn Hollis Age: 14 Sex: Male Rte. 1, Box 75 Beaverton, AL 35544 Likes: *Youngblood, X-Men, Savage Dragon*	Grant Lautz Age: 13 Sex: Male 58 Tara Rd. Orinda, CA 94563 Likes: *Youngblood, X-Men, Prophet*	Bruce Washington Age: 15 Sex: Male 965 Tinton Ave., Apt. #5C Bronx, NY 10456 Likes: *Spawn, X-Men, WildC.A.T.s*	Phil Skoglund Age: 15 Sex: Male 216 North St. Tracy, MN 56175 Likes: X-titles, *Savage Dragon, WildC.A.T.s*	Amy Turner Age: 20 Sex: Female RR2 Box 480 Montgomery, IN 47558 Likes: *Ren & Stimpy, Darkhawk, WCW Wrestling*

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Ask the WIZARD

Q: What are Venom and Carnage's webs made of?

—Evil M. Sergi, Depew, NY

A: *It's just like spit, snot, mucus, or any of that other fun stuff a living body produces. These symbiotes produce the webbing as part of their regular body functions.*

Q: Is Speedball a mutant, an android, or something else?

—D. Blair, Burleson, TX

A: *Something else. He was a normal Joe till he was nailed by an extra-dimensional energy source during one of his dad's experiments.*

Q: Can Warblade shape any other parts of his body?

—B. Bang, San Gabriel, CA

A: *While a dozen jokes spring to mind at your inquiry, the answer to your question is no.*

Q: If Rogue absorbed Wolverine's memories, would she know everything that Wolvie forgot?

—G. Burosh, South Bend, IN

A: *Rogue did absorb Wolvie's memories back in* Uncanny X-Men *#158 and has never sat down with Wolvie to tell him any secrets, so we'd venture to say no.*

WIZARD wonders...

If Archer & Armstrong died (or whatever) during "Chaos Effect," woul anybody notice?

Ask the Pros

Hey, Nelson:
"What's the grossest thing you've ever eaten?"
—W. Rodriguez, West Haverstraw, NY

PHOTO: J. SCHUYLER

Have a question that's bugging the heck out of you and that no one can answer? Heck, the Wizard can answer anything. Just send your stumpers to Ask the Wizard, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064

your addle-brained little fanboy mind might think that Vampirella is God's gift to fangs, a date with her just ain't gonna happen. Sorry.

Hey, better you hear it here than from someone on the street.

Dear Wizards,

What's the difference between the Spawn/Batman crossovers other than price?

Ramon Escobedo
Uniondale, NY

One is lousy, one is really lousy. I'll leave it up to you to decide which is which.

Dear Wizard,

My mom's giving me $100 to buy a comic book. Which one should I get? I really can't decide.

John Rarwoski
Valencia, CA

Don't buy one—buy 100! Chances are you can get 100 different issues of the greatest comic series of all time, *Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandos*, for an average of about a buck a throw.

Dear Wizard,

Who would win in a fight: Bloodwulf [from *Darker Image*] or Lobo?

Paul Beckett
Warren, RI

Since Bloodwulf is just a pale imitation of Lobo, it would be Lobo by a knockout in the first round.

HOW THE HECK DID CONTRIBUTING EDITOR MARC WUKOTSKY GET IN HERE?!!

PHOTO: CHI-CHI'S BIRTHDAY PARTY!

Dear Caped One,

My baby brother deep-fried my *Amazing Spider-Man* #300. Will this affect its resale value?

James Plummer
Salisbury, England

Package it with some ketchup and salt and you should be OK.

Dear Wizard,

Is *Wizard* magazine going stop after a period of time?

Victor Favela Jr.
Glendale, AZ

Not as far as I know. We're in this for the long haul. Unless, that is, you know something I don't. I hope you don't. I mean, I like my job. And I just don't see myself with a career in the french-frying arts.

Dear Wizard,

What does the "DC" stand for in DC Comics?

Jason Sebesto
Landisville, PA

It stands for *Detective Comics*, the company's flagship title that started way back in 1937 and still brings you monthly tales of the Batman.

Dear Wizard,

A few years ago, Batman editor Denny O'Neil said somewhere that an alternate ending to the "Death in the Family" storyline was written that was to be published just in case the fans voted to save Jason Todd. Does that version still exist, and if so, will it ever be published?

Thomas Coe
Burt, MI

According to Maureen McTigue, assistant manager of marketing communications at DC Comics, "The whole death sequence was only three pages long, so it really wouldn't amount to a big story change." As to if these three pages will ever see the light of day, it's doubtful. Says McTigue, "Jason Todd is dead. Long live Tim Drake."

Dear Wizard,

I want to know what ran through your head when you had Magneto take out Wolverine's adamantium. And also, why did you have Sabretooth join the X-Men? I mean, that was really dumb!

Carlos Pino
Paterson, NJ

This is a surprisingly common type of letter. So just to clear up any confusion, let's set the record straight.

Marvel Comics had Magneto take out Wolvie's metal bones and linked up Sabretooth with the X-People. They also did everything else that ever happened to any Marvel Comics character.

We are Wizard Press. We publish *Wizard*, *Entertainment Retailing*, and *Collector's Sportslook*. We do not publish comics. Companies like Marvel, DC, and Dark Horse make the comics; we just report on them. *Capice?*

Dear Wizard,

Why did you pick Beavis and Butt-Head for the cover of *Wizard* #30 instead of a mutant?

Ron Scott
Atoka, TN

They *are* mutants—just look at those heads! They've got the greatest head length-to-width ratio since Conway Twitty.

Dear Wizard,

I like Brutes & Babes because I myself am an aspiring artist. Although I just turned 15 years old, I want to draw like I'm 25.

Alec Stewart
Port Republic, MD

Just wait 10 years.

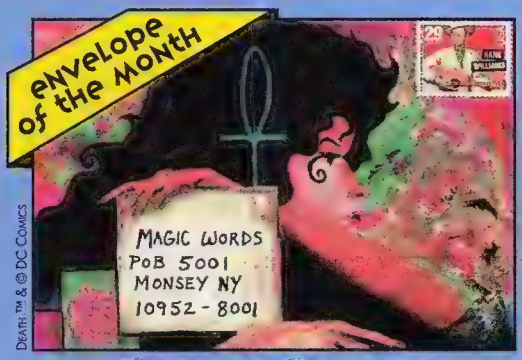
Dear Wizard,

Can you answer these?

1) Will Shadowhawk ever team up with

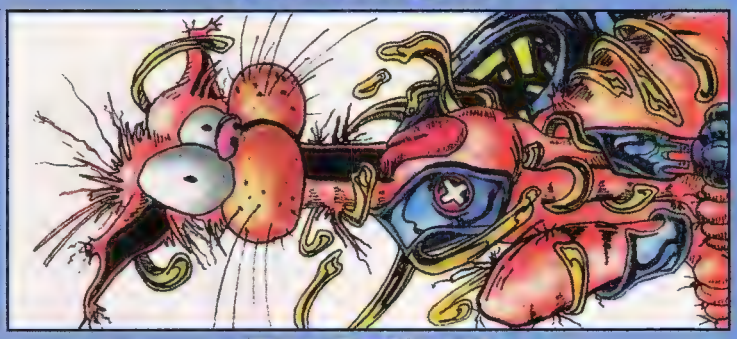
Enveloping LETTER ART!

When you drop us a line, show us your drawin' skill! If it's good, we'll print it here, and boom, you'll be famous! Just think, as soon as your letter gets printed, you'll become a household name and you'll start dating the likes of Sandra Bullock or Richard Grieco (or both, if you like). Fans who get their letter art printed will receive a *Supreme* #1 signed by Brian Murray, a *Bloodstrike* #1 signed by Dan Fraga, the issue of *Wizard* in which their envelope appeared signed by the *Wizard* creative staff, and a nifty *Wizard* baseball cap! The creator of the best envelope wins all that neat stuff plus an *X-Men* (vol. 2) #30 signed by Andy Kubert and a *Beavis & Butt-Head* #1 signed by Rick Parker and Mike Lackey! Please include a clearly printed return address on the back of your envelope.



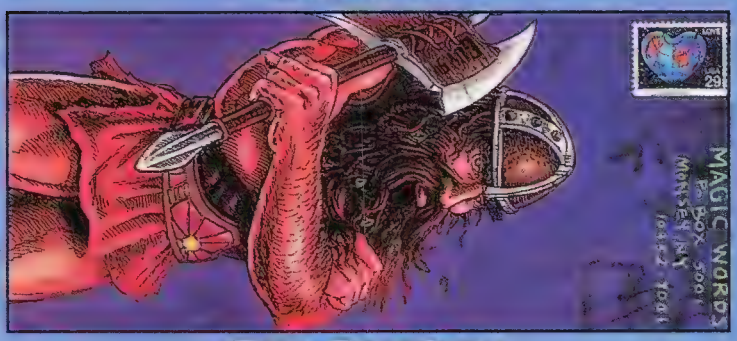
Death ™ & © DC Comics

Robert Browne
Forrest City, AR



Bill the Cat ™ & © Berke Breathed. X-O Manowar ™ & © Voyager Communications Inc. (I know, this would make Bill here B-O Acknowar.)

Tor Dalland
Burien, WA



We're not exactly sure who this dwarf is, but if he's Gulus Thunderhead from Golden Axe, he's ™ & © Sonic Video Game Company

Guy Gondron
Miami, FL

Hulk and Dr. Strange ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Mike Lapidus
Northfield, IL

Wolverine?

2) Will Grendel ever fight Spider-Man?

3) Will Bane come back to fight Batman?

Mike Thacy
Brooklyn, OH

Sure.

1) Nope.

2) Hey! Now that would be neat! If Spidey wore his black duds, you could hardly tell them apart. Actually we buzzed Grendel creator Matt Wagner, and he says there are no plans for such a tussle.

3) Bet the house on it.

Dear Wiz Kidz,

My friend and I were flipping though our old comics when we found a copy of *Amazing Adventures* #5, which at first we thought was *X-Men* #3, the first appearance of the Blob. We would like to know what the first appearance of the Blob is. Thank you.

Sean "Fenn" Fennessey
Huntington Station, NY

The first appearance of Fred J. Dukes, aka the Blob, was indeed *X-Men* #3. *Amazing Adventures* in this incarnation (vol. 3) was an early '80s reprint series that chronicled the adventures of the original X-Men.

Dear Wizard,

Here is an idea for a cool comic. Bring Illyana back from the dead. Have her become Magik again and fight alongside Longshot. They could also be joined by Nikki Doyle (Wild Thing), Slick (from *Machine Man*), and the Dazzler. I would buy it.

Stephen Couvillion
Baton Rouge, LA

Yeah. You and no one else.

Well, cats and kids, that's it. I've got to get back to my real life, such as it is. Write soon. Until next month, I remain...

Your humble and faithful servant,

Jim McLauchlin

Jim McLauchlin is the news editor of our companion publication,* Collector's Sportslook. *He thinks the lowest point in American pop music history was Motley Crüe's cover version of "Anarchy U.K."

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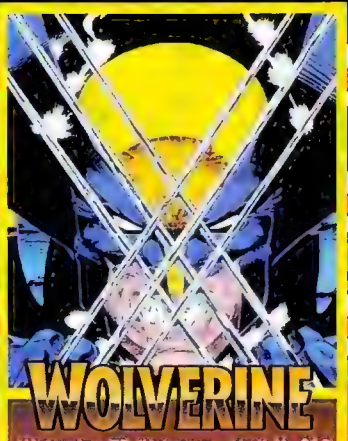

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Bloodshot 2 5,8,12 Bloodstrike 1-5,7
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Hulk 409,411-413 JL Task Force 5
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Legends Dark Knight 1,5,6,25 28,62,63
Lobo 1 Lobo: Infanticide 1-3
Maxx 1,2,4,6 New Mutants100(3rd)
Phantom Force 1(Kirby) Robin 1,7,8
Savage Dragon 3(Min) vs. Turtles 1
Savage Dragon II #2,3 5,6 8(Regular)
Shadow of Bat 16-23 28 29
Shadowhawk 3,4 Shadowhawk II 1,3
Spawn 8-13 Supreme 1(Lim 1),2-8
Spectacular Spider-Man 201-210,213
Spider-Man 16 39 41-45,47
Spider-Man 2099 4 6 12,14
Spider-Man Mutant Agenda #1,3
Superman 76-80 83-87,90, Ann 5
Superman: Man of Steel 19,20,22 27-29,34 35, Ann 2
Steel 1 (New!) Super-Patriot 1,2
Team Youngblood 1,2,4
Vanguard 1-4 Wild Star 1,2,4
Venom Enemy Within 2, Funeral Pyre 1
Web Spiderman 100-109,113, Ann 9
X-Factor 84 87, Annual 8
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Uncanny X-Men 284-289 291 294 297,299,302,303,305 315
Wolverine 72-74 76 78-83 Global Jeopardy 1, vs. Punisher 2,3
X-Factor 91,93-99,101,102
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Deathmate: Epilogue (Gold cover)
Harbinger 6 (w/ coupon) Magnus 5
Maxx #1/2 (Limited Wizard Edition)
Rai #0 (Limit 2) Rune #0 (Lim 1)
Solution #0(Lim 1) Spawn 2(Lim 1)

BEST SELLERS!

Ghost Rider Fear Deluxe
Iron Wolf Trade
Overstreet 1993 Price Guide
Shadowhawk Trade (Issues 1-4)
Spider-Man Soul of Hunter
Venom Returns Trade
X-Force & Spider-Man Trade
X-Men Adventures Volume 1
X-Men Anniversary Magazine
X-Men Wedding Magazine

HOT CARDS!

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DC Cosmic Teams (Sealed Box)
Deathmate Blue & Yellow Box
Deep Space Nine Limited Set
Marvel Series I (Per pack)
Marvel Series IV (Per Pack)
Marvel Series IV (Sealed Box)
Punisher Gunpowder Cards (pack)
Spiderman (Fleer) Pack Box
Star Trek: Master I Pack Box
Superman Returns (Per pack)
Valiant Era Cards Pack Box
Valiant Unity Cards Pack Box
Youngblood Pack Box

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Contains 20 different superhero comics!

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Wolverine™ - Marvel Entertainment Group, 1994.

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DISCOVER

You Know Deep Down You May Not Survive.

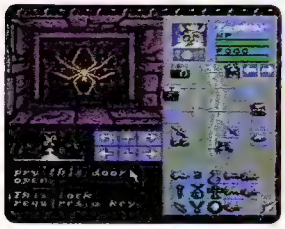
**Eye Of The Beholder.
The First
ADVANCED DUNGEONS
& DRAGONS®
Game For The SNES.**

There is a criminal conspiracy hiding in the Waterdeep sewers. Well, at least that's what legend says. As evidence of its truth: some rather imposing locks and traps, slashing skeletons, flashing swords and sizzling spells.

Based on this limited knowledge, it would seem the only thing to do is find these criminals and destroy them. As you aspire to the roles of High Priest, Lord, Paladin, Ranger Lord, Wizard or Master Thief, you and your party will experience face-to-face combat and encounters with an intensity only AD&D® role playing affords.

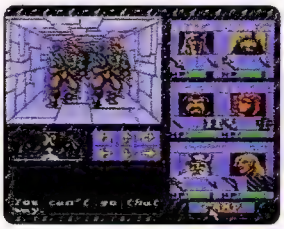
A 3-D graphical point of view makes the fantasy seem real. The graphics are hotter than you know what. And the plots and subplots are complex enough to challenge even the most avid AD&D fanatic.

But even when you think you see the light at the end of the sewers, the Eye Of The Beholder awaits.



While finding the key to unlock the spider's double door, you learn the status of "Airia".

One of the Drow guards who has found your party swings his whip to paralyze "Airia".



When four Kenku soldiers block your path, you have a fantastic battle on your hands.

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PHOTO: J. SCHUYLER

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

Joe Quesada (left) and Jimmy Palmiotti (above) present Event Comics, their new publishing company.

QUESADA & PALMIOTTI Announce Big EVENT

The fan-favorite art tandem of **Joe Quesada** and **Jimmy Palmiotti** have announced the formation of their new creator-owned imprint. The company, to be known as **Event Comics**, consists of Quesada, Palmiotti, and Publisher Laurie Braddoch. The formation of Event has been in the works for many months now.

According to Palmiotti: "With Joe and I being good friends, we've been traveling to shows together for a while, and we always found ourselves coming up with potential creations and asking each other why don't we put these creations out. Figuring that the major companies will use our creations for toys and other items, with us getting nothing in terms of royalties, we finally said, 'Hey, we should put the characters out ourselves.'"

"People have been asking us when we were going to do some creator-owned work for about a year and a half now, and I just didn't feel the time was right yet," Quesada says. "We were going to start on Event Comics after my stint on *Ninjak*, but that stint was cut short, so we decided the time is right now."

Event Comics's first title will be ***Ash***, named after a superhero whose alter ego is a fireman. Quesada says he believes that "firemen are the noblest and truest of heroes, and it amazes the two of us that this concept hasn't been used before."

The pair will share plotting and scripting duties on *Ash*, with Quesada penciling and Palmiotti inking the title. "Jimmy and I mesh together perfectly," Quesada says. "We feel that we've worked with some of the best writers in the business, and hopefully we can take what they've taught us to heart to pull together a great story."

"This book won't be slow paced," Palmiotti asserts. "It's gonna move. We look at it in terms of a movie, with a set beginning, middle, and end, and hopefully the market will respond positively and we'll be able to keep their interest as the story unfolds."

The duo states that Event's philosophy will be aimed towards maintaining quality in terms of story, art, and production as well as producing stories and characters to which people can relate. "If we sell five copies or a million copies," Quesada says, "this is a book that we feel anyone can pick up on the stand and say that it not only looks good but it's a good read."

Palmiotti concludes, "These stories will have our stamp of approval on them, so it's our time and opportunity to put our money where our mouth is."

The formal introduction of the company will take place at this year's Chicago Comicon, July 1-3, to be held at the Rosemont Expo Center.

—Rob Samsel

PHOTOS: AL ORTEGA

William Shatner, the admiral of parlor tricks, stunned fans by making a Fabian Nicieza out of balloons. "After this, I'm a-goin' where no man's gone before!" said unholy lord of Trekkers.

PHOTO: J. SCHUYLER

New plans for Marvel's UK line announced. Fan reaction overwhelming.

PHOTO: J. SCHUYLER

Harvey launches new Raggedy Ann and Andy comics. "They're grim and gritty for the '90s!" says spokesman.

In Memoriam: DON THOMPSON, 1935-1994

Don Thompson, 1935-1994

Don Thompson, co-editor with his wife Maggie of ***Comics Buyer's Guide***, died on May 23, 1994. He was 58, and just one month shy of his 32nd wedding anniversary.

Although no cause of death has been given, it "was almost certainly congestive heart failure, for which he had been under treatment," according to a statement from *CBG* Publisher **Greg Loescher**.

Thompson was born October 30, 1935, in Barren, Penn. After getting a B.A. in journalism from Pennsylvania State University, he began a career in newspapers, including a long stint for the *Cleveland Press*. He also co-edited *The Comic Book Book* with Dick Lupoff.

He met his future wife, Maggie Curtis, in 1957, and they married in 1962. Together, they edited a number of science fiction and comics fanzines, including *Harbinger*, *Comic Art*, *Ballast*, and *Newfangles*. When *Newfangles* folded, the Thompsons began writing a column called "Beautiful Balloons" for Alan Light's *The Buyer's Guide to Comics Fandom*. In 1982, Light sold the *Buyer's Guide* to Krause Publications, where it changed its name to *Comics Buyer's Guide* and the Thompsons became its co-editors.

As word of Thompson's death spread through the industry, professionals and colleagues of all stripes stopped to remember this seminal fan. Invariably, they mentioned his gentlemanly manner and good humor.

"Don will be remembered by everyone as a nice guy in a small field filled with big egos," says **Marty Stever**, vice president of marketing at Valiant. "It will be difficult to edit 'Don and Maggie' out of our speech."

"Our memories of Don as a true fan will only be surpassed by those of a real gentleman," agrees Dark Horse Publisher **Mike Richardson**. "He was a pleasure to talk to and his presence on the convention floor and in print will missed for years to come."

Warp Graphics co-founder **Richard Pini** has similar thoughts. "Don was a gentleman. In a business where mudslinging seems to be the order of the day in personal interaction, Don never stooped to conquer. He never had to. He spoke his mind fairly. And his humor was the kind you had to take with water. I'm going to miss those qualities."

"Back when fanzines used to be mimeographed onto stone slabs, Don Thompson was a founding father of it all," writer **Mark Evanier** says. "There was never any money in it, but he and Maggie did it; both had a love for the medium and its fans."

Writer **Peter David**, a *CBG* columnist, told *Wizard* that Thompson "valued comics and their history, the people who created them, and their continued promise as an art form. I valued Don's work as an editor and critic, and was proud to call him my friend. I will miss him, and his counsel, terribly."

Don Thompson is survived by his wife, Maggie; a daughter, Valerie; a son, Stephen; and several brothers and sisters. The family asks that contributions be made in Don's name to the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, 38 Miller Ave. #176, Mill Valley, CA 94981.

—Patrick Daniel O'Neill

SHARPE to be New HULK Artist

When penciler **Gary Frank** announced that he would be leaving ***The Incredible Hulk*** with November's issue #425 to work on a series of Hulk specials, there was much speculation as to who would replace him. According to *Hulk* editor **Bobbie Chase**, **Liam Sharpe** (*Death's Head II*) is slated to become the title's new regular penciler. Frank and Sharpe will each pencil half of issue #425, a double-sized book. Robin Riggs will ink Sharpe, while longtime Frank inker Cam Smith will ink his last Hulk material with Frank's half.

Among the things happening in *Hulk* #425, the most important, according to Chase, will be the unveiling of the "savage personality"; Chase won't specify whose personality this will be, though one can guess that the green behemoth will evolve even further under longtime writer **Peter David's** reign as series writer. The story, entitled "The Monster Within," is expected to change the Hulk radically. How much? Well, we'll just have to wait till November to find out.

NEW UNIVERSE with ZERO Month

All DC Universe books shipping between August 16 and September 6 will be #0 issues, in an effort to reintroduce the DC Universe to readers in the wake of the five-issue ***Zero Hour*** mini-series, which ships throughout July and early August.

Most #0 issue will reintroduce their lead characters and/or teams, while a few will introduce new heroes and teams. Some issues will have revised histories, while others will recount unaltered histories in order to better acclimate the reader. After this month, all the books will return to their regular numbering.

Among the major events: in ***Hawkman* #0**, the new Hawkman, who is very much like the Silver Age version, will go on a quest to learn more about his new powers; in ***Superboy* #0**, Superboy's first three days out of Project Cadmus; in ***Green Lantern* #0**, Green Lantern vs. Green Lantern, as Kyle Rayner possibly witnesses Hal Jordan becoming a hero again; in ***The New Titans* #0**, **Damage**, **Impulse**, **Arsenal**, **Terra**, and the new **Green Lantern** form a team; in ***Action Comics* #0**, Superman's dead body is discovered under the Superman Memorial; and in ***Catwoman* #0**, Catwoman is caught by the police, forcing a redefining moment.

Zero Month will let you catch your favorite DC heroes for the first time...again!

Busiek Off of *MARVELS II*

Kurt Busiek, co-creator and writer of the hit mini-series ***Marvels***, has confirmed that, contrary to previous reports, he will not write the highly anticipated sequel.

Busiek says that although there were creative differences, his departure from the project was amicable. "Everybody was concerned with...how to make ***Marvels II*** the best series it could possibly be. It just turned out that the best way to do that was for me to bow out."

Busiek explains that the sequel will be painted not by *Marvels* artist **Alex Ross** but by newcomer **Tristan Schane**, whom Busiek calls "a terrific young painter with a lot of energy and enthusiasm." However, Busiek claims he was writing the sequel to fit his former collaborator's style and not Schane's.

"To ask Tristan to paint *Marvels II* the way Alex would have would be unrealistic and unfair," Busiek says. "It would have been like hiring John Romita Jr. and asking him to draw like Jim Lee—a waste of a talented artist, as you bury his strengths under the effort of trying to be something he's not. Unfortunately, that was pretty much what I was doing."

Busiek says that Schane "deserves a writer who can come onto the project and write to his strengths and give him a platform from which he can do his best work, as I hope I did for Alex. I'd love to work with Tristan on some other project sometime, one which would involve a different sensibility from the start, so we could both start fresh."

The writer says that *Marvels II* will no longer be based upon his proposal or story material and that it will be started from scratch.

A replacement for Busiek has not yet been named, and the series's '94 release has been pushed back to an undetermined time.

TM & © MARVEL

Neither *Marvels* creator Busiek nor Ross will return for the sequel

In the meantime, Busiek will continue to write for Marvel, starting with the monthly *Night Thrasher* and the prestige format *Strange Tales* one-shot, to be painted by Ricardo Villagran, and starring Dr. Strange, Thing, and the Human Torch.

What's Up WITH... Death II?

After the huge success of the three-issue ***Death: The High Cost of Living*** by **Neil Gaiman** and **Chris Bachalo**, a second *Death* mini-series was announced by DC. However, while Gaiman has publicly stated he would like to do another Death mini-series with Bachalo, he admits he has no story concept yet.

—William A. Christensen and Mark Seifert

Stroman Axes Axis

Larry Stroman, co-publisher of **Axis Comics** and co-creator of its flagship title, ***Tribe***, announced in May that effective immediately, he was dissolving the company, canceling the bulk of its announced projects, and breaking off his professional association with partner **Todd Johnson**. Stroman said that this decision would not affect the production of *Tribe* #4-#6 or ***Shaman's Tears*** #3-#4 but that it would effectively terminate work on all other announced projects, including ***Bar Sinister*** and ***Sable and the Cat*** and further issues of *Tribe* and *Shaman's Tears*.

In a faxed announcement, Stroman stated that he regretted making the decision, but due to a drastic change in his working relationship with *Tribe* co-creator Johnson as well as to increased production costs, the action was necessary. The fax also cited "creator apathy" and unforeseen market conditions as factors in the decision. "My last 10 years spent creating comics had not prepared me for the distractions and complications that arise in the business of comics," Stroman states. "Over the last year with Image and the Axis, my artistic output has been minimal. This drastic action is regrettable, but it is time I return to what I do best: art."

The creators of previously announced Axis series such as *Deathgrip*, *Beasties*, *Quantum 5*, *Nightvenger*, *Power Company*, and *Marcus Arena* are free to pitch their projects to publishers. Stroman made it clear that all creators will be paid for work completed prior to the announcement. Axis's comic magazine, *Fan*, has been sold to its editor, Stephen Egged.

Stroman's fax concluded by stating that *Tribe* would continue as announced through issue #6 but that it would take off in an entirely new direction beginning with issue #7. The fax implied that Stroman was taking sole possession of *Tribe* and that the series would continue publication under a new name.

Johnson was unavailable for comment.

—Robert J. Sodaro

COMPANY UPDATES

AC COMICS
In August's *Femforce #76*, Rad is back and she brings the Femforce to their knees, thanks to the mysterious Traveler. Plus: readers will learn the Traveler's identity.

ANTARCTIC PRESS
Twilight-X returns in *Twilight-X Quarterly #1* in August. The story, by Joseph Wight, has Jed and Toots defend their island getaway from attacking Neo-Nazi Wankers.

BONEYARD PRESS
Boneyard Press and CFD Productions will co-publish *Outlaw Nation: An Anthology for the Damned* in October. This horror anthology, weighing in at 80 pages and $4.95, will be published quarterly.

DARK HORSE COMICS
This fall, Dark Horse is reprinting Marvel Comics's original adaptation of *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*. This two-issue mini-series will be recolored for this go-around.

DC COMICS
The JLA spin-off book *Extreme Justice*, due in January, is rumored to feature Blue Beetle and Booster Gold among its characters.

DEFIANT
Readers who want to see Jim Shooter and the Defiant crew should catch the *Defiant: Inside the Tower* video in August. Sit in on creative meetings and watch profiles of various creators. Retail price is $6.95.

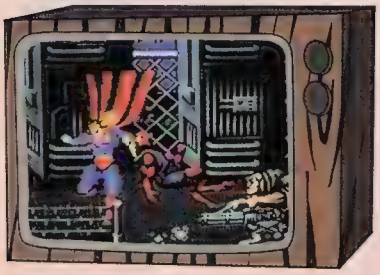
EXPRESS PUBLICATIONS
Under its Parody Press banner, Express will release a *Hellshock* spoof in August entitled *Hellspock*, by *Zen Intergalactic Ninja* writer/artist Bill Maus.

FULL MOON COMICS
Full Moon has officially changed its name to Silver Moon Comics. Silver Moon has not altered its plans to publish two monthly titles by next summer. It says it's currently negotiating with such writers as Peter David, Harlan Ellison, and Marv Wolfman to develop the two titles.

IMAGE COMICS
A *Youngblood: Year One* mini-series, to be written by Kurt Busiek and drawn by Rob Liefeld, is expected to ship sometime this fall.

KITCHEN SINK PRESS
Ocean City Capital, an L.A. entertainment investment banker, is reportedly entering an agreement to buy Kitchen Sink. The publisher is declining to comment, although it will say there is interest in buying it.

The Death & Return of Superman
Sunsoft
Super NES/1 Player
Available: July '94



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Based on DC Comics's death of Superman and "Reign of the Supermen" comic book stories, *The Death & Return of Supermen* offers 10 levels of nonstop action that require gamers to control five different characters (Superman, the Cyborg, the Eradicator, Superboy, and Steel) as the story unfolds. Each character can hover in the air or walk along the ground as he battles dozens of evil characters using combinations of eight unique fighting moves.

The graphics are detailed and the on-screen characters are large. Much of this game is based upon horizontal scrolling, hand-to-hand combat, and the use of various super powers and weapons. There are also flying/shooting stages. In between each level, comic book-style graphic animation tells the story behind this adventure. Superman fans who enjoy fighting games will be delighted with the action offered by this 16-meg cart.

TIE Fighter
LucasArts Entertainment
IBM PC (or compatibles)/1 or 2 Players
Available: Summer '94

The sequel to the best-selling computer simulation *X-Wing* offers *Star Wars* fans the opportunity to join the Empire and take part in the ongoing battle between the Rebel Alliance and the Empire. In *TIE Fighter*, players must restore and enforce Imperial rule by crushing Rebel insurgencies.

From a graphics, sound, and overall game play standpoint, *TIE Fighter* is extremely similar to *X-Wing*—both are highly detailed combat simulations that put gamers in the pilot

™ & © Lucasfilm Ltd.

seat of various spaceships and fighters from the *Star Wars* movie trilogy. The majority of the graphics are created using 3-D polygon and bitmap animations that lend realism to the on-screen action. Interspersed throughout the adventure are cinematic sequences that convey the storyline.

Just as with *X-Wing*, LucasArts plans to release additional mission disks (sold separately) for this game, so gamers can experience new combat campaigns. The game's excellent graphics are combined with sound effects and music from the *Star Wars* movie, making this an exciting simulation that allows gamers to become immersed in the *Star Wars* universe.

Wolfenstein 3-D
Imagineer America Inc.
Super NES/1 Player
Available: Now

It started with a group of computer hackers from Id Software who developed a series of computer games known as *Doom* and *Wolfenstein 3-D*. These megapopular PC-based shareware games have been available via modem, from bulletin boards and on-line services only. Straight from the PC underground comes a Super NES version of *Wolfenstein 3-D* that offers six missions and over 29 levels of shooting action, seen from a virtual reality-like first-person perspective.

While the graphics and sound effects in this Super NES version of *Wolfenstein 3-D* aren't as impressive as those in the PC editions, this one-player game offers the same type of challenges. Players race through mazes and shoot at enemies. This cart is compatible with the basic Super NES controller or the optional mouse accessory.

Coming Soon...

Nintendo has announced that it does not plan to produce a 32-bit system like competitors Sony, Sega, and Matsushita have...Malibu plans to develop a video game based on its *UltraForce* title...Acclaim Entertainment plans to release *Stargate* (based on the upcoming movie) for the Sega and Nintendo systems, but first, prepare for *Mortal Kombat II*, coming in September. Acclaim will also create a video game based upon the upcoming *Batman Forever* motion picture...*Alien vs. Predator* and *Double Dragon V* are coming for Atari's Jaguar.

—Jason R. Rich

MARVEL to Publish HARVEY COMICS

Harvey Comics and **Marvel Entertainment** have entered into an agreement in which Marvel will assume worldwide publishing and distribution responsibilities on behalf of Harvey. The new association will start this fall with the launch of five Harvey titles, and more new titles are planned for 1995.

"As evidenced by their continuing dominance in the comic book publishing industry, Marvel Comics is without peer when it comes to marketing and distributing comic books," Harvey Executive Vice President **Barry Blumberg** says. "We're delighted to have their expertise behind **Casper**, **Richie Rich**, and the entire Harvey line of comics."

Michael Z. Hobson, Marvel Group VP, says, "This agreement with Harvey reflects Marvel's determination to expand our presence in the kids' comic book market. The Harvey line of characters, known to every generation since 1939, affords us a tremendous opportunity to build the best line of children's comics that has been seen in decades."

LIGHTNING COMICS
October's *Bloodfire/Perg* #1 and November's *Perg/Bloodfire* #1 are "internal crossovers" that will share the same story but be told from the perspective of each protagonist...The government assassin Deathmark will receive his own mini-series in November...Perg will return in his own #0 book in December...Bloodfire will get his next mini-series in January 1995.

MALIBU COMICS
Giant-Size Wrath* #1, shipping in August, kicks off an all-new storyline and introduces a new costume for Wrath...August's *Prototype* #0 collects the four-part Prototype storyline from *The Malibu Sun* #33-#36...In August, look for Malibu UltraGear and BravuraWear through the direct market. The merchandise will include top-quality hats, pins, shirts, jackets, and gym bags...In September, the four-part story "Hostile Takeover" will cross through *The Night Man* #12, *Solitaire* #10, *The

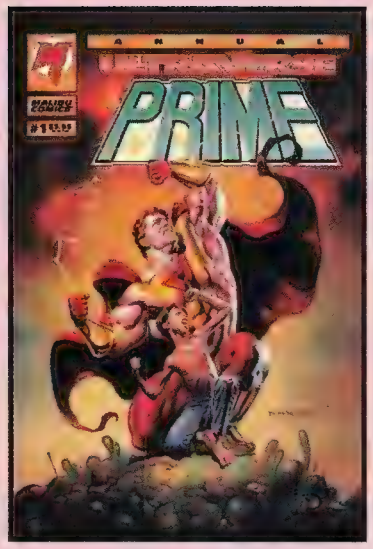
LEE Gets LIFETIME Contract

On April 25, **Stan Lee**, chairman of Marvel Comics and Marvel Films and co-architect of most of the Marvel Universe, was signed to a lifetime contract by Marvel Entertainment Group. Lee, 72, has been with the publisher since 1939.

Marvel CEO William Bevins Jr. says, "Lifetime contracts are rare in any business, and the entertainment industry is no exception. But rarer still are individuals with the gifts of Stan Lee, who has been Marvel's creative powerhouse for more than a half century."

PRIME Month is October

Malibu is designating October "**Prime Month**," and it's celebrating the occasion with a **Boris Vallejo** cover on ***Prime Annual* #1**. *Prime Annual* #1, which introduces the new post-Rogue Prime costume drawn by **Norm Breyfogle**, depicts Dr. Gross's search for a subject with whom Prime can breed; Hardcase guest stars.



Painter Boris Vallejo struts his stuff on the cover of Prime Annual *#1.*

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LONE RANGER Returns

The Lone Ranger & Tonto ™ & © Palladium Ltd. Partnership

The Lone Ranger and Tonto might never ride again in their new mini-series.

In August, look for Topps's four-issue ***Lone Ranger and Tonto*** mini-series by **Joe R. Lansdale, Timothy Truman**, and **Rick Magyar**. The first two names are no strangers to Westerns; they produced the acclaimed ***Jonah Hex: Two-Gun Mojo*** for Vertigo last year. *Lone Ranger and Tonto* is expected to be so different that the heroes will split ways on the very first page of #1!

The story goes like this: an Aztec treasure on loan from the Mexican government is stolen, and the Texas governor orders the Lone Ranger to retrieve it. Unfortunately for the Ranger, the recovery of the treasure is the least of his problems as he encounters the best and worst the frontier has to offer.

According to Topps, this series will depict the protagonists as "real people with real emotions, who possess real and noble codes of ethics." And wait until you see the "I'm-not-gonna-take-any-more-crap" Tonto; it's unlike any version ever seen before.

Pick this series up at an affordable $2.50 per issue.

MILLER Continues SIN CITY

Writer/artist **Frank Miller** will continue his popular and acclaimed *Sin City* series of series with ***Sin City: The Big Fat Kill*** in November. This six-issue series stars Dwight McCarthy, the star of *Sin City: A Dame to Kill For*, who will lead a war on the streets of Sin City. Crime bosses are looking to annex Old Town, the nasty part of town that even the cops don't dare enter, but the resident gals aren't as submissive on some issues as they are on others.

The Big Fat Kill, which will be published by Dark Horse Comics, is expected to sport an all-new design in its packaging, so check it out this fall.

***Solution* #13, and *Giant-Size Prototype* #1. The story has a corporate war fought not by bidders but by superheroes...In November, Hardcase will star in a four-issue mini-series with a story that predates *Hardcase* #1. The story, guest-starring the Squad, was determined by writer James Hudnall to be too big for a single #0 issue.**

MARVEL COMICS

Marvel has a whole bevy of new projects slated for release between July and December: a four-issue *Bishop* limited series by John Ostrander, Carlos Pacheco, and Cam Smith that reveals much about the enigmatic X-Man; a *Sabretooth* trade paperback reprinting the popular '93 mini-series; a four-issue *Vision* limited series written by Bob Harras that pits Vision against an Anti-Vision with a secret agenda; *Fantastic Four* #396, in which the foursome are reunited and the groundwork is set for issue #400; a *Marvels* trade paperback reprinting #0-#4; a sequel to *Hearts of Darkness* starring Ghost Rider, Wolverine, and the Punisher, set to ship late in the year, by Howard Mackie and Ron Garney; and a three-issue *Punisher: Year One* mini-series by Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning with art by Dale Eaglesham.

NOW COMICS

Look for the *Syphons* trade paperback, reprinting this year's three-issue mini-series, in August for $5.95.

SKY COMICS

In July, look for *Star Police* #1, based on the action figures line to debut from Hasbro in 1995. The story follows four young space cadets who patrol the spaceways while trying to spare Earth from an alien invasion. Look for it at $2.50.

TRIUMPHANT

To further its commitment to produce solid science fiction stories, Triumphant will now place a "Science Fiction/Action Adventure" logo on the upper left portion of its covers.

VALIANT

Coming in August is *Timewalker* #1, in which Ivar infiltrates Nazi Germany. By Bob Hall, Don Perlin, and Gonzalo Mayo...Also in August is *Ninjak Yearbook* #1, by Mike Baron, Bryan Hitch, and Andy Lanning. When Dr. Silk develops a way to conceal nuclear devices for terrorists, Ninjak must try to avert disaster by facing off with Silk and his assassins.

WARP GRAPHICS

The characters from Warp's fantasy epic *Elfquest* will appear in a comic book to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Warp, a Poughkeepsie (N.Y.)-based publisher, will produce an eight-page, $2 cover price comic with proceeds benefiting the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central New York. The Make-A-Wish Foundation grants wishes to extremely ill children. This marks the first time that the *Elfquest* characters have been used to promote a national charity, according to series co-creator Richard Pini.

Cartoonist Jailed on OBSCENITY Charges

On March 31, 1994, a Pinellas County, Fla., jury found 24-year-old **Mike Diana** guilty of selling an obscene publication, his self-produced comic ***Boiled Angel***. His sentence included three years probation and a $3,000 fine.

Diana first came to Florida law enforcement officials' attention during the investigation of a series of murders in the Gainesville, Fla., area. California police sent Florida authorities copies of *Boiled Angel*, which prominently features accounts of dismemberment, cannibalism, and sexual violence. Although Diana was cleared and another suspect convicted, the magazines were passed on to the Pinellas County sheriff's office. They, in turn, ordered copies from Diana, who sold *Boiled Angel* only via mail order. Diana filled the order, the first he had received from his own area, and soon found himself facing criminal prosecution for obscenity.

Assistant State Attorney Stuart Baggish, who prosecuted the case, claimed that Diana's work contributed "to the breakdown of the moral fiber of the country." Diana contended that his drawings merely reflect the ills of society.

Obscenity is not protected under the First Amendment, according to the U.S. Supreme Court. In a 1973 case, it set forth a three-pronged test for determining whether material is obscene. First, it must appeal primarily to prurient interest. Second, it must be patently offensive according to the standards of the local community. Finally, taken as a whole, it must lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

Diana's lawyer Luke Lirot and *New York Times* artist Peter Kuper, called in as a defense expert, claimed that Diana's drawings show influences ranging from artists such as Pablo Picasso and Edvard Munch to the Oscar-winning movie *The Silence of the Lambs*. "Not all art is meant to soothe or entertain," said Lirot. "Sometimes art has to be ugly." On the other hand, the prosecution's experts, two professors from local Eckerd College, said that the publication had no literary or artistic merit.

The "community standards" test was the apparent key to the prosecution's case. In his closing argument, Baggish pointed out that "Pinellas County has its own identity. It doesn't have to accept what is acceptable in the bathhouses in San Francisco and...in the crack alleys of New York."

The jury took only 90 minutes to convict.

Judge Walter Fullerton sentenced Diana to a weekend in jail, making him the first cartoonist in U.S. history to be jailed on obscenity charges. On the following Monday, in addition to the probation and fine, Fullerton ordered Diana to undergo a psychological evaluation, take a journalism ethics course at his own expense, and perform eight hours a week of community service. Finally, he prohibited Diana from having any contact with children under 18 and from drawing anything obscene, even if only for personal use. Diana's probation officer may search the cartoonist or his home at any time without a warrant to see what he has been drawing.

The arrest and sentence has drawn criticism from fellow cartoonists and media scholars. Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist **Art Spiegelman** found the decision "barbaric." **Mort Walker**, artist of the Beetle Bailey newspaper strip, also came to Diana's defense.

Diana's defense was largely underwritten by the **Comic Book Legal Defense Fund**, which is planning to appeal. Donations are being solicited for the appeal, and those wishing to contribute can send money to the CBLDF at P.O. Box 693, Northampton, MA 01061.

—Paul J. Grant

WIZARD looks back...

The Shadow

The Shadow knows much more than what evil lurks in the hearts of men. He also knows how to be successful in various entertainment industries. He's seemed home in several different media since his creation in 1930.

THE SHADOW™ & © CONDÉ NAST PUBLICATIONS

That year, pulp publisher Street & Smith began sponsoring a radio show to help promote its pulp title *Detective Story Magazine*. The show featured a host known as the Shadow, whose sinister laugh made him a favorite with listeners. To take advantage of his popularity, Street & Smith developed the character and sponsored a contest that required participants to write a description of the Shadow based on a series of 10 clues. Thus the Shadow changed from a formless radio voice to a mysterious cloaked figure with a quick wit, formidable athletic prowess, and marksmanlike aim.

With the character more fully defined, Street & Smith's next step was to put him in an actual adventure. Pulp writer Walter Gibson wrote the first Shadow story, "The Living Shadow," which appeared in *The Shadow Magazine* #1 in April 1931. *The Shadow Magazine* was so successful that it quickly switched from a monthly to a biweekly schedule. Gibson continued to write *The Shadow Magazine* sagas until 1946.

In 1937, the Shadow appeared on film for the first time in *The Shadow Strikes*. Also that year, the Shadow's radio show was overhauled, with the Shadow recast as the star of his own adventures rather than merely narrator. The show introduced supporting character Margo Lane as the Shadow's companion, and is well remembered for the menacing voice of the Shadow intoning, "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows!" Orson Welles played the Shadow on the show until 1939. The radio show cemented the Shadow's alter ego as Lamont Cranston (he had acquired a variety of identities over the years) and also gave him the ability "to cloud men's minds so that they could not see him."

That ability was incorporated into some of the Shadow's subsequent adventures in his newspaper strip, which ran from 1938 to 1942. Drawn by artist Vernon Greene, the strip incorporated elements of both the pulp and radio show.

Meanwhile, *Shadow Comics* #1, featuring reprints from Greene's newspaper strip, was introduced in March 1940 by Street & Smith. Greene later produced original stories for the comic. The comic version included the Shadow's supporting characters and persistent foes, most notably his archrival, Shiwan Khan.

Both comic and pulp ended in 1949, and the radio show ended in 1954, but the Shadow returned in books and comics in a 1960s revival. Original scribe Gibson wrote the novel *The Shadow Returns* in 1963.

Archie Comics gave the character his own series in 1964, but this version shared little more than a name with previous incarnations. In 1973, DC Comics produced a more faithful version with art by Michael Kaluta. In 1986, writer/artist Howard Chaykin redefined the character in an ultraviolent four-issue DC mini-series. DC followed up with *The Shadow* (1987) and *The Shadow Strikes* (1989), both ongoing monthlies.

Last year, Dark Horse Comics obtained the rights to do Shadow comics, and began with their *Shadow: In the Coils of Leviathan* mini-series. A second Dark Horse-produced Shadow mini-series is in the works. On July 1, Universal Studios will release *The Shadow*, a feature film starring Alec Baldwin. A comic book adaptation of the film will be written by Joel Goss and illustrated by Shadow veteran Michael Kaluta.

—W.A.C. & M.S.

LEE MACLEOD
Sci-Fi
Fantasy Art
Card Collection
Best known for his work on Lucas Films' "Howard the Duck" and Warner Bros. "Batman" campaigns, Sci-Fi/Fantasy artist Lee MacLeod brings his unique style and graphic technique to his first ever trading card series! This visually exciting 60 card set includes one TEKCHROME™ bonus card in EVERY PACK! Plus, look for randomly packed Lee MacLeod autographed cards!
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DHC Becomes CGW

With issue #25, ***Dark Horse Comics*** will be canceled and replaced by a monthly title focusing on several **Comics' Greatest World** characters who will debut a few months beyond *DHC*'s cancellation. As many readers of *DHC* know, the title has been showcasing serialized Comics' Greatest World stories since #8, the debut of X. The new book—it has yet to be named—will be formatted much like Marvel Comics's defunct *Marvel Team-Up* title, teaming various characters in stories pertinent to the happenings of CGW. ☆

This Month in History

Historic comic book events that took place in the month of AUGUST.

1938 ***Marvel Science Stories* #1:** Pulp publisher Martin Goodman introduces this science fiction pulp magazine. He liked its name so much that he used it for his publishing enterprise, Marvel Comics.

1941 ***Police Comics #1:*** This oddly titled comic from Quality Comics contains the first appearance of Plastic Man.

1953 ***Batman* #78:** This appearance by DC's first green manhunter from Mars, Roh Kar, predates J'onn J'onzz's first appearance by more than two years.

1969 ***Spider-Man* cartoon:** Spidey ends his first stint as an animated star after two years on ABC.

1975 ***Super Friends* cartoon:** The Super Friends, which initially featured Batman, Robin, Superman, Wonder Woman, and Aquaman, end their original two-year run on ABC. The team went on to star in four follow-ups to the original show.

1989 ***Batman* #436:** The first appearance of Tim Drake, the boy who would become Robin III.

1992 ***WildC.A.T.s* #1:** Jim Lee launches his first title at Image Comics.

—W.A.C. & M.S.

GAMER'S GUIDE

BY ROBERT T. BOGLEY

It is a dangerous time. The international criminal conspiracy known as VIPER continues to grow in strength under the leadership of the mysterious Supreme Serpent. An ancient group of evil sorcerers calling itself DEMON works to acquire vast magical power to use in the service of their dark gods. The ruthless members of Eurostar, headed by the villainous Fiacho, seek to unify all of Europe—by force, and under their rule. An awesomely powerful entity called Firewing, the ultimate warrior of an alien race, searches for a worthy challenge among the paranormals of Earth and leaves the mangled bodies of heroes in his wake. The robot Mechanon, seemingly unstoppable, strives ever towards his ultimate goal—the painful eradication of all organic life. Watching over it all, Dr. Destroyer schemes, prepares, and moves ever closer to ruling the world!

Sounds like these jerks need to get their butts kicked, doesn't it? But don't go looking for them in the pages of a comic book; these villains and others can only be found in the *Champions* role-playing game. Released in 1981, *Champions* was the first superhero role-playing game ever produced, and it remains a real favorite with gamers today.

CHAMPIONS™ & © HERO GAMES

Champions, which is designed by Hero Games and produced and distributed by Iron Crown Enterprises, uses a set of rules known as the HERO System and is compatible with any other game using that system, meaning that characters, monsters, and other game elements can be swapped between them. *Fantasy Hero, Horror Hero, Cyber Hero, Ninja Hero,* and *Western Hero* all use the HERO System rules and can be combined with *Champions* to produce some very interesting adventures.

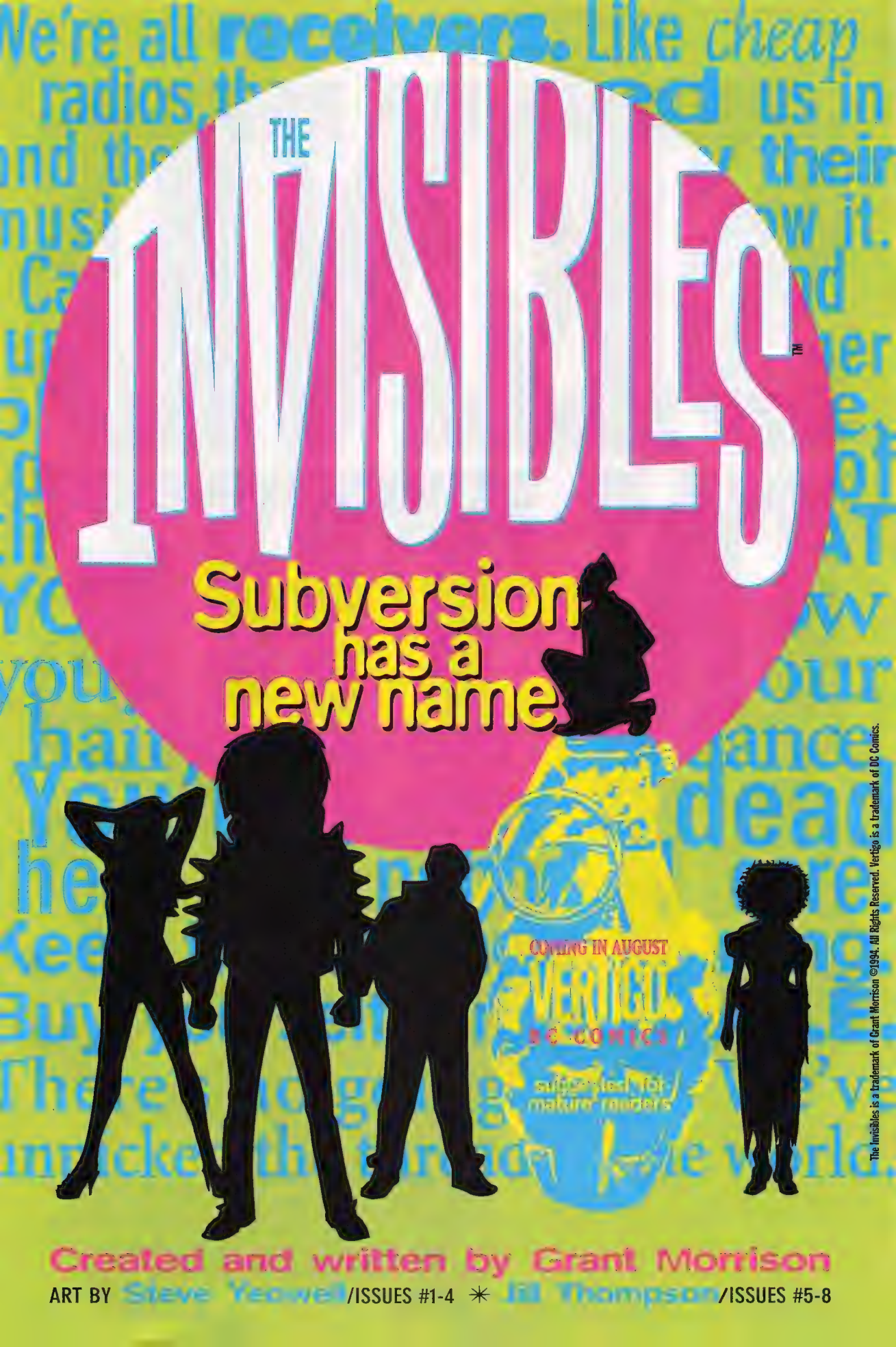
The HERO System is comprehensive and flexible and can be used to create virtually any kind of character in any setting. The basic game mechanics are not difficult, but there's a lot of detail in the system and it can take a while before someone really gets the hang of the game. The only dice needed to play are the normal six-sided variety, although you may need about 20 of them. Because combat can get complicated, the game runs more smoothly if stand-ups or miniatures are used to mark the locations of the characters. (A company called Soldiers & Swords has recently released a line of miniatures designed specifically for *Champions*.)

Characters are designed by spending Character Points. Every character starts off with a certain number of Character Points and can earn more by taking disadvantages. All these points are then spent to buy the character's powers, skills, and other attributes. More points are awarded after each adventure, and these can be used to improve the character. The powers available to characters are often very broad, requiring the player to refine them in order to get the exact power he or she has in mind. This can make character generation rather time consuming, but it also allows for a great degree of flexibility. Virtually any comic book character can be reproduced using the *Champions* rules.

One of the real highlights of the *Champions* game is the great array of villains provided for use in the game (many of whom can be found in the supplement called *Classic Enemies*). Most have interesting powers, such as being able to lift hundreds of tons or to shoot energy blasts that could sink a ship.

This is a well-supported game, with quite a few sourcebooks and adventure modules available. The *Dark Champions* expansion modules, designed for players who want a gritty street-level campaign, are some of the most popular of the recently published stuff. A magazine that provides some really nice supporting material, *Adventures Club*, comes out quarterly.

The artwork in *Champions* products is generally pretty good—the great George Pérez has even done the covers for a few of the books. This is definitely a game worth checking out.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SEND IN THE CLONE

Spider-Man and all related characters (including Spider-Man) ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

MARVEL REDOUBLES ITS EFFORTS ON SPIDER-MAN

By Rogers Cadenhead

There have been numerous rumors floating around about Spider-Man lately. Uncle Ben is coming back. Aunt May is dying. Mary Jane and Peter Parker are getting a divorce. Gwen Stacy is alive. Spider-Man will be replaced by Venom. Peter Parker will be replaced by Aunt May. Peter Parker will be replaced by Peter David. Spider-Man will be replaced by Spider-Ham...

Wizard has learned that all of these rumors are true.

Actually, that's a lie. My clone told me to write that.

Speaking of clones, the real scoop behind the "mysterious stranger" in the Spider-Man titles is that he is Peter Parker's clone, introduced way back during the Ford administration in *Amazing Spider-Man* #149 (October 1975).

The storyline, which begins this summer in Marvel Comics's Spider-Man titles, will build towards a climax in *Amazing Spider-Man* #400, shipping in February 1995. Marvel is guarding the details closely and promising big things for Spidey's fans.

THE BIG CHILL

"It's becoming hard to surprise readers," says Tom DeFalco, Marvel's editor-in-chief. "This will. If they miss it, they will forever hate themselves."

Details of the plotline were first announced in the *Marvel Comics Publishing Plan* for the second half of 1994. It states: "The mysterious stranger coming cross-country in the wake of Peter Parker's over-the-edge behavior and Aunt May's stroke is revealed to be the long-thought-dead Peter Parker clone!"

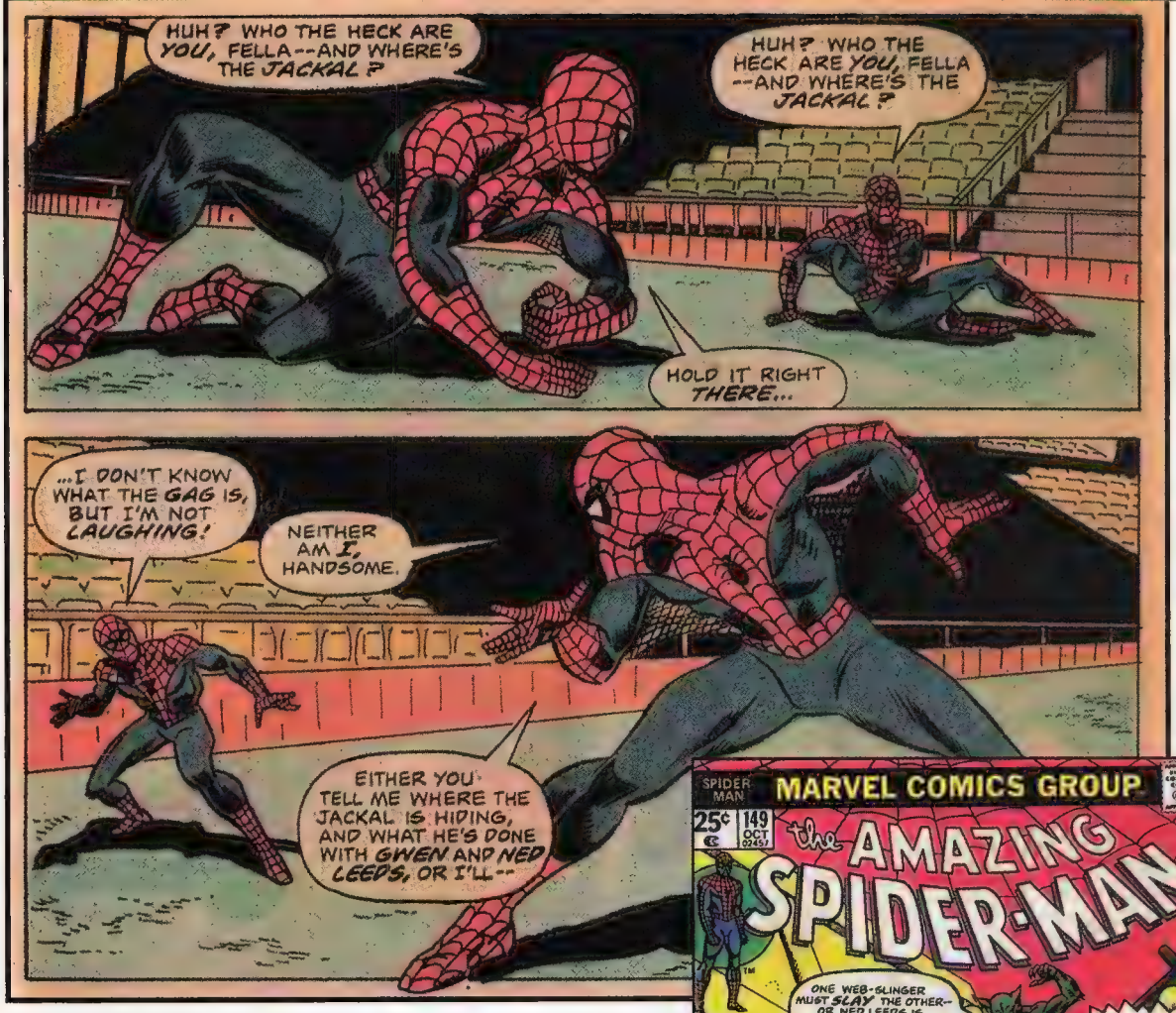
The clone isn't returning just to swap grooming tips with his "brother." Aunt May's stroke is one of the things that brings him out of hiding.

"Despite the fact that he's operating as a clone, he has the feelings that Peter has, and loves her," says *Spider-Man* penciler Tom Lyle.

The clone's visit is also prompted by Spider-Man's actions in *Spectacular Spider-Man* #216. In that issue, scheduled for a late July release, Spider-Man attacks a foe who turns out to be too weak to handle the physical battering—an old man, according to the *Publishing Plan*. "The Peter Parker clone returns to set things right!"

The assault ties into the recent "Pursuit" and "Shrieking" stories, which ran through May's Spider-titles and *Amazing* #390-#393, respectively, in which Spider-Man has responded angrily and violently to the troubles he's endured of late. Parker's anguish over discovering that his 'parents' were actually robots has caused a frightening obsession with crime-fighting. This behavior is not appreciated by the person who may know Parker best—his double.

"Spider-Man's still a moral character," *Amazing Spider-Man* penciler Mark Bagley says of the genuine article. "The clone hasn't gone through



Spidey and the clone face off in the clone's first and "final" appearance, *Amazing Spider-Man* #149.

what Pete has gone through." The contrast between the two will be one of the primary themes of the clone storyline.

"The reason these stories are fun for me is that it gives you a very obvious metaphor for the question of identity," says *Amazing Spider-Man* writer J.M. DeMatteis. "Peter Parker has always been the one with the biggest identity crisis. Now he's faced with this echo of himself who isn't himself coming on top of all the stuff we've done with the parents and the 'Pursuit' storyline."

TALES OF CLONES TO COME

For those who were not yet born or otherwise unaware in 1975, the Spider-Clone saga unfolded in *Amazing Spider-Man* #142-#151.

To give you an idea of how long ago this was, here's a few snippets of dialogue from one of the issues:

"Why do you always call me Tiger?" Peter asks Mary Jane.

"Why do I—?" she replies. "Oh, Petey, I call you Tiger 'cause you're HOT! Now, c'mere, Tiger, and kiss m—MMMMMMMM."

After they disengage from the smooch and Peter hops a flight to Paris, Mary Jane reacts to their passionate game of tonsil hockey: "Far...freakin'...out." This was Spider-Man in the '70s, a bygone era when writer Gerry Conway and penciler Ross Andru were teamed on the title.

In issue #143, Spider-Man spots a woman at a distance who looks like Gwen Stacy, the Spider-sweetheart who met an untimely demise in *Amazing Spider-Man* #121.

He meets this mysterious woman in #144 and accuses her of being an impostor, only to learn later that she was cloned from cells taken by a college teacher named Professor Miles Warren (aka the villainous Jackal in his spare time) during a biology experiment. Peter Parker was a student in the same class.

In #149, the Spider-Clone, also a Warren creation, makes his first appearance. He and Spider-Man tussle, then decide they're on the same side and try to save Ned Leeds from an imminent explosion. *Boom!* One succeeds while the other appears to die, crushed like a nonradioactive spider under tons of rubble.

In #150, Peter Parker wrestles with the issue of whether he is the real thing or the Xerox copy. He decides that since he has the major hots for Mary Jane Watson, he can't be the clone. That guy didn't even know her well—the Peter/Mary Jane relationship just started to bloom around #143.

As for the seemingly dead clone, his body is tossed into an incinerator by Spider-Man in *Amazing Spider-Man* #151. End of story, right?

CLONE AGAIN

Wrong. The reader and Spidey never see the body destroyed. Apparently the clone "got better," although Marvel isn't explaining how.

One of the people who's curious about this turn of events is Len Wein. He was the editor of Conway's clone storyline and began writing with *Amazing* #151. "I was the writer who threw the body into the incinerator," Wein says. "It was the first thing I did, because I didn't want him around anymore. At the time I thought it was a complication that didn't add anything to the book."

Wein says that having the clone back is a pretty radical event for the webhead—one that Spider-Man chroniclers wanted to avoid 19 years ago. "It's Peter Parker, really: same DNA, same blood, same person," he explains. "You can't have two of them running around."

If you're one of the readers who is saying "Why not?," you've got something in common with today's Marvel staffers. Terry Kavanagh, writer of *Web of Spider-Man*, first proposed the clone's return at an editorial meeting of the people who create the Spider-books. DeFalco and Spider-Man group editor Danny Fingeroth were gradually won over to the idea.

"It was so scary to Danny Fingeroth at first that he didn't want to do it," Lyle says. "At first Tom DeFalco said no, too. My initial reaction was boy, we better do this right or this is going to stink."

DeMatteis was also a little leery at the beginning. "What do we need that for?" he asked at the time. "But the story we've involved him in built so perfectly," DeMatteis says. "There are lots of twists and turns and surprises. Issue #400 is going to set off some rockets for the next six months to a year afterward."

Interestingly enough, this is not the first time that Marvel will answer the question, "What if Spider-Man's clone had survived?" Writer Bill Flanagan tackled the subject in *What If...?* (vol. 1) #30 in 1981.

In Flanagan's tale, edited by DeFalco, the Spider-Clone believes he is the original Peter Parker. Since the cells he was cloned from were taken from the original Peter Parker at the time of *Amazing Spider-Man* #31, published in 1966, Peter thinks of himself as a high-school nebbish who is still sweet on Betty Brant instead of Gwen or Mary Jane.

When the reality becomes apparent to him, he frees the original Parker from a "clone casket" and offers his life back to the other Spider-Man.

Oddly enough, the original doesn't want all of his life back. He decides to share it. "You be Spidey on Mondays and Wednesdays. I'll take Tuesdays and Thursdays," he proposes. "I get the bed—you get the couch. I get Mary Jane and you get Doc Ock."

As for the current storyline, there's no word yet about who walks away with Mary Jane. (If neither wants her, I get dibs.) However, the secretive DeMatteis was willing to confirm one thing about the finale to the storyline—the *What If...?* conclusion is not it. "I can guarantee [that] this will not be the ending we are heading for," he says.

BRAVE NEW WORLD

But while they won't be sharing their lives, the two Spider-Men will be sharing their books—at least through issue #400 of *Amazing*.

Starting in September—when the clone reappears in *Amazing Spider-Man* #395 and *Spider-Man* #52—the Spider-Clone will be featured in the issues of *Web of Spider-Man* and *Spider-Man*. Spider-Man will headline in *Amazing Spider-Man* and *Spectacular Spider-Man*. During this period, each pair of comics will contain a continuing storyline. For example, DeMatteis says that his *Amazing Spider-Man* stories will be picked up in the following issue of *Spectacular*, and the same will go for the clone's comics.

Lyle designed the initial costume for the Spider-Clone. "It's a noncostume costume," he says. The uniform is meant to be a makeshift design for the clone, because Marvel does not want to give the impression that he is leaping into the public eye as a full-blown superhero.

Lyle hopes that fans will see the similarities to the classic Spider-Man costume design without thinking it's a new costume for the original Peter Parker. "It's a dark-red bodysuit with a full-face mask that is similar to the one on the original black costume," Lyle says. "He also has a sweatshirt on with a different spider-logo, and the web-shooters are on the outside of the suit."

If you're wondering what to call the clone, well, apparently, so is Marvel. The result of that debate will probably be affected by the climax to *Amazing Spider-Man* #400, which Marvel is trying its best to keep under wraps. "We're still debating that," Lyle says.

Though almost 20 years have passed since the original clone story appeared in real life, the clone has only been gone for a few years in Marvel time. Bagley and DeMatteis estimate the interim at four or five years, while Lyle says it's been two.

BODY DOUBLE

Since Peter Parker and his clone were separated, their lives have headed down divergent roads. "They have had a lot of different experiences," Bagley says. "Without friends and family, the clone sees himself as an artificial person."

But even though the clone has a unique personality, there are numerous similarities between him and the original. "He cares a lot for Aunt May and a lot for Mary Jane," Bagley notes. The members of the Spider-Man staff have faith in the clone's viability as a character independent of the original. "It's a clone of Peter Parker, and Peter Parker's an interesting character," DeMatteis says.

It has yet to be determined whether the clone will be an important part of the Marvel Universe after the upcoming saga. "I don't know how that's going to shake down," Bagley says. "If he's a viable character, why not use him? It could be a complement to Spider-Man rather than a distraction from [him]."

DeMatteis is writing four eight-page backup stories to run in a month's worth of Spider-Man titles. These will tell the history of the clone, from his birth in a cloning tank to his confrontation with Spider-Man.

The backups will address one bit of history that needs to be cleared up. *Spectacular Spider-Man Annual* #8, part of the "Evolutionary War" storyline in Marvel's 1988 annuals, maintained that the Gwen Stacy and Peter Parker clones weren't really clones at all; they were actually brainwashed, mutated versions of existing people. "We're going to cover that [in order] to refute the information," Lyle says.

As for the other Gwen, she wandered off into the sunset in *Amazing Spider-Man* #149, deciding that she and Peter Parker could not have a relationship. Marvel seems content to leave that ending in place. Lyle says that she's still out of the picture.

Another person in the Spider-mythos who will be examining the issue of identity is Mary Jane. No, she hasn't been cloned. But, DeMatteis says, "Mary Jane is going home to Pittsburgh to search her roots and make peace with her family—this will be running in *Amazing Spider-Man* and *Spectacular Spider-Man*."

Married characters are often considered more difficult to write about than single people, but DeMatteis says that the Parker-Watson marriage presents its own set of issues. "I like writing [about] the relationship," he says. "Peter Parker was always the everyman, the nerdy kid who got the powers and had to deal with them. Now he'll struggle with marriage."

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES

Although the clone is the main event, there are other newcomers set to arrive in Spider-Man's life this year. The pros on the Spider-team are most excited about Judas Traveller, a major new villain intended to be a recurring foil for any and all Peter Parkers.

"He's incredibly powerful—a mystical Magneto type," Bagley says. "Judas is a large and mysterious character with a group of

Traumatized by the truth about his "parents," Peter is no longer acting like...himself?

cronies following him around."

DeMatteis named Judas, and Bagley designed the visuals. "He's got long hair and a cloak and is seven feet tall," Bagley says. "He's a really imposing figure. It's like Shaq [basketball player Shaquille O'Neal] walking into a room."

Traveller's clash with Spider-Man will draw to a close in the storyline that precedes "Power and Responsibility," DeMatteis says, speaking of a four-part tale that crosses into each of the Spider-titles during August.

"It brings the whole 'Pursuit' thing into climax," he says. "It's all been building since the death of the parents. Each ending seems to be a beginning—something refreshing, new, and exciting.

"The wonderful thing about it is, the more we play with this, the better the stories get," DeMatteis continues. "I haven't had this much fun working on superheroes in years. We get together for the editorial meetings and it's a blast. It really pumps Spider-Man up."

Lyle says that fans are either going to love or hate the story. Either way, they should be interested in its outcome. "We're hoping to keep people in suspense the whole time," he says. "Our goal is to lead people to believe they're going in a certain door, then lead them to the other."

If Marvel were a theme park, Lyle says, "Power and Responsibility" would be its hottest attraction for the coming year. "It's going to be *the* ride, I think."

Bagley, an artist who has become identified with the webhead in recent years, is looking forward to seeing the story hit the stands. "It's kind of scary and kind of exciting," he says. "We've got to take care of Spider-Man—a lot of people care about him. I think it's going to be great."

DeFalco describes the plans for the milestone 400th issue as "stunning." This book should truly help to increase the sales for the various Spider-titles, which were up 33 percent in 1993, according to the *Publishing Plan*. DeFalco attributes the sales boom to the talented people working on the books.

"With the exception of the plotter of *Spectacular Spider-Man*, you've got top people working on these comics," says DeFalco, the plotter of *Spectacular Spider-Man*.

Careful not to divulge the final twist, DeMatteis says that the climax to the present Spider-Man storyline will be one to remember. "*Amazing Spider-Man* #400 is going to totally turn things upside-down," he says.

MIRROR, MIRROR

How upside-down might the story get? There's one last rumor to discuss. In *Amazing Spider-Man* #150, Peter Parker was distraught because he didn't know if he was the original or just the clone who thought he was the original.

"I'm the real one, Gwen," Parker says in #149. "Believe me."

"But...how can you tell?" Gwen's clone asks.

"Simple. I...uh," Parker stammers, realizing his dilemma. "Far out."

To solve his problem, he visits researcher Curt Connors (aka the Lizard) and is subjected to a series of tests. Connors tells him that there are subtle differences between the two that can be detected because the clone was developed over a much shorter time period than the true Peter Parker.

Before the results come in, Spider-Man realizes the strength of his feelings for Mary Jane. He decides that it would be impossible for the clone to have such an emotional response about her, since the relationship is too recent for the duplicate to have experienced it.

Confident in his reasoning, Peter tosses Connors's test results to the wind at the end of *Amazing Spider-Man* #150.

"If you remember," says Lyle, "He never did look at the information that Curt Connors made up for him..."

Fans of Spider-Man should consider the implications of that statement for a moment. Is Marvel planning a shocker to rival the surprise of *The Crying Game*? Will the "original" Peter Parker end up on the wrong side of the Cloning Game?

As Mary Jane herself might say, "Far freakin' out!" ☆

Rogers Cadenhead is a freelance writer based in Fort Worth, Texas. He's presently delegating most of his writing responsibilities to a mysterious guy who looks just like him.

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Answers: 1. Team 7, 2. See below, 3. International Operations or I/O, 4. 401 East Maple Leaf.

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Simeon Leach (age 14) Dallas, TX

Second Prize Winners

Johnny Litchfield (age 21) Monks Corner, SC
Chris A. Mills (age 18) Broken Arrow, OK
John Charles (age 25) Troy, OH

And a hearty congratulations to the other 150 Kindred Sweepstakes winners! ***Oops!*** Due to story rewrites, the answer to question #2 was not revealed in *Kindred* #1. Winners were judged on their answers to questions #1, #3, and #4.

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FAVORITE *MK II* CHARACTER (WE JUST WANT TO KNOW)

The heroes of the DC Universe versus Extant, the villain of *Zero Hour*.

Less Than Zero

Writer/artist Dan Jurgens reveals his plans to recreate the DC Universe with *Zero Hour: Crisis in Time.*

By Patrick Daniel O'Neill

Name the first costumed hero in the history of the DC Universe. Superman? Are you sure? The Crimson Avenger? Do you know or are you guessing?

Now you understand the problem that has faced DC readers and creators since the 12-issue *Crisis on Infinite Earths* series was published in 1985-86. So much changed during that series and so much has changed since that nobody knows what's "real" anymore.

No one is more aware of that problem than writer/artist Dan Jurgens. The man who may forevermore be known as "the guy who killed Superman" in the landmark *Superman* (vol. 2) #75, Jurgens now seeks to acquire an even bigger moniker: "the guy who unraveled DC's time stream." He hopes to earn that distinction with July and August's *Zero Hour: Crisis in Time*.

Tinkering With Time

DC's continuity complications have their roots in October 1956. That month, *Showcase* #4 introduced a new version of the Flash, a superhero from the Golden Age. The new Flash proved to be a hit, and other new or revised superheroes soon followed. For many experts, *Showcase* #4 marks the beginning of the Silver Age.

Four *Showcases* and three years later, the Flash got his own series. It was edited by Julius Schwartz, who became interested in seeing his current charge meet the Golden

All artwork and characters ™ & © DC Comics

"I don't think the fans have to have a clear-cut understanding of what happened in a 1965 DC comic book, but, by God, if you're reading a character we restarted a year and a half ago and you're already being told a story didn't happen, you're getting the shaft! That's irresponsible of the publisher! John Byrne once said to me that if he'd known what he was going to start with Superman, he never would have done it." —Dan Jurgens

Age Flash, whom he had also overseen. To do so, Schwartz created the "multiverse," a series of separate universes that were alike and different in uncanny ways.

This invention opened up the DC Universe (or Multiverse, as it became) to an infinite number of possibilities. Unfortunately, the multitude of parallel universes was confusing for both fans and creators. In 1985-86, *Crisis on Infinite Earths* depicted a cataclysmic event that narrowed the multiverse down to a single universe. That simplified things—for a short time, at any rate.

In 1986, writer/artist John Byrne revamped Superman, effectively erasing the continuity the character had developed since his debut in 1938. Byrne began from scratch, taking elements that he liked and introducing them for the "first" time in his *Man of Steel* mini-series as well as *Superman* (vol. 2), *Action Comics*, and *Adventures of Superman* (the latter with writer Marv Wolfman).

Byrne's character renovations weren't the only post-*Crisis* revisions, but they were the first and probably the most important ones. "We certainly had continuity problems with the rest of DC because of Superman's restart," recalls Dan Jurgens, whose first Superman job was penciling 1987's *Adventures of Superman Annual* #1. "There were various examples—Hawkman, certainly the Legion—that made us very aware of what was happening. It's no secret that we fought kind of a running battle with the Legion guys in trying to work out the continuity problems there." Jurgens suspected that it was once again time for DC to simplify its continuity with another *Crisis*-type event.

A Crisis in Continuity

"It was really driven home when I started writing *Justice League America* [with #61]; I realized if I ever wanted to do a flashback story that referred to something that happened all the way back in *Justice League of America* #50, it would be almost impossible. All the characters had been rewritten; I didn't know who had been where and what and when. It became a very difficult prospect. About the only character left untouched was the Atom."

Another example of Jurgens's troubles was a Superman story done less than two years after the character was revamped by John Byrne. "Continuitywise, Hawkman was probably the straw that broke the camel's back. When we did *Action Comics* #650," released in 1990, "we wanted a flashback to the sequence in *Superman* #18," released in 1988, "when Hawkman took Superman to what was left of Krypton. And the Hawkman editor at the time said, 'No, you can't do that! Hawkman and Superman have never met.' 'Huh? A year and a half into the new Superman and you're rewriting Superman's continuity already? You can't do that—that's screwing the fans.' That's really what happened—all these changes ended up screwing the fans."

In 1989, writer/artist Timothy Truman did to Hawkman what Byrne did to Superman: started from scratch in a mini-series, the three-issue *Hawkworld*. However, the new Superman had already met the old Hawkman, thereby raising a question: did the meeting actually happen? The revamped Superman continuity, which is now considered DC gospel, conflicted with the revamped Hawkman continuity.

"I was writing *Justice League America* at the time as well, and it affected that," Jurgens says. DC was trying to use "retroactive continuity"—ignoring past events that don't fit current continuity—with Hawkman. Jurgens objected to this because he felt it turned the stars of *JLA* into chumps. Jurgens hopes that *Zero Hour* will straighten out the DC Universe's continuity.

How? Jurgens only says that the Hawkman character will return to what made him work in the first place. "Hawkman with metal wings is not Hawkman; that's Gliderman. The cool essence of Hawkman is that he's a brawny guy, would pull out lots of cool old weapons to solve his problems, and he had these really great, big, dramatic-looking wings that were just fantastic if drawn properly. That's the stuff you have to go back to."

Past Imperfect

Jurgens wants to make it clear that he thinks writers should be allowed to change the past of their characters. However, he doesn't think readers should need an encyclopedic knowledge of the DC line to appreciate the company's comics. "I don't think the fans have to have a clear-cut understanding of what happened in a 1965 DC comic book," he explains, "but, by God, if you're reading a character we restarted a year and a half ago and you're already being told a story didn't happen, you're getting the shaft! That's irresponsible of the publisher!

"John Byrne once said to me that if he'd known what he was going to start with Superman, he never would have done it. And that's no fault of John's; by and large, he left us with a stronger and better character."

But Jurgens does think readers should have a general knowledge of "how things fit together" in the fictional world of the DC Universe. "I hope to accomplish a couple of things," he says. "In terms of continuity, I don't think a project like this can establish something like, 'Yes, *JLA* #37 happened, #38 did not.' That's not what this is for. What it is meant to do is give current readers an idea of where things stand, an idea of how things relate to each other."

He becomes somewhat nostalgic discussing the differences between the DC comics of his youth and today's more convoluted books. "As things were rewritten, we lost the relationship between the characters and where they stand," he recalls. "That's something we all used to know: we used to know that Superman was first, then there was Batman, and we knew the order in which these characters appeared. We had a feeling for it. It didn't have to be stated in everything we read, but we had a feeling for how these events fell together as different pieces of the puzzle and how the puzzle looked when it was put together. That's been lost, and I want to get it back.

"The other thing I want to do is give the DC Universe a fresh kickoff, which is why we have the #0 issues the month after *Zero Hour* finishes." DC's "Zero Month," during which a #0 issue of every DC Universe title will ship, takes place in August.

Zero Hour, the five-issue weekly mini-series shipping in July and August, will explain why

the history of DC's world is so complicated—and why it now seems to be getting even worse. "Slowly, the readers...have been exposed to the idea that something is amiss," Jurgens says. In *Zero Hour* #4, the first issue of the mini-series (it counts down from #4 to #0), the readers will discover that the Crisis on Infinite Earths depicted in the 12-issue series of that name never really ended.

Infinity Revisited

Jurgens compares the continuity situation to a natural phenomenon. "If you take the concept of a hurricane plowing through a town, there are aftereffects that last a long time. *Crisis* was the most incredible disaster ever known to the mankind existing in the DC Universe... *Zero Hour* will show us that ever since *Crisis*, there have been little blips, little anomalies, popping up throughout the time stream—ba-dump, ba-dump, ba-dump—and now there's a force that is controlling these anomalies, and it is tearing things apart again. That theory will explain the multitude of Hawkmen since *Crisis*, among other problems. I'm taking what happened in reality and pouring it into the story."

To build on Jurgens's analogy, the hurricane has a sentient controller—a mysterious entity who couldn't create the hurricane but who can direct where it's going to hit. This controller, the villain of *Zero Hour*, is known as Extant and is a familiar face in the DC Universe. To find out who he is, readers should pick up *Showcase '94* #9, shipping June 28.

"Extant operates outside our rules of reality and time and physics," Jurgens says. "He can see the DC Universe from day one to day last. His is a future of dominance, and that's what he sets out to do. He realizes that the Crisis never ended, and he decides to capitalize on that. He says, 'I'm going to change things and make it the way I want it to be,' and that's when he begins to change things by trying to erase everything that's already there."

Extant has an inordinate advantage because DC Universe denizens don't remember the first Crisis. "All they remember about a Crisis is that Barry Allen died during it, that there was a big battle with the Anti-Monitor, and that's about it." The creators, Jurgens continues, have run away from the Crisis ever since it happened, but he feels that the Crisis could be put to use. "Let's take the Crisis, admit it, and use it as the trigger to fix things. Everything that comes after 'the fix' [in *Zero Hour* #0] is new and individual to *Zero Hour*."

The Time Trapper's gonna meed a new bathrobe when "Zero Hour" is over...or will he?

A Wrinkle in Time

But time is an amorphous thing. How does an ordinary mortal (or even an extraordinary one) know that time has gone screwy? "One of the first clues that there's something wrong is that we're in Gotham City and Batgirl is well and operating in costume," Jurgens explains. "This is clearly Barbara Gordon. Batman and Robin show up and Batman's response is, naturally, 'You're supposed to be paralyzed in a wheelchair. Either you made a great recovery or something's wrong.' Batgirl answers, 'I was never shot. I don't know what you're talking about. I'm Batgirl, this is Gotham, I belong here.' That's the first indication something is wrong on an overt level.

"Later, Vandal Savage is battling Hawkman and suddenly there are eight or more Hawkmen there—some we've seen before, some we haven't—all mimicking the same events as various timelines start to blend with our own. That's the more-than-obvious signal that something isn't right down in Hooterville," he laughs.

The human and superhuman heroes of Earth will get some very special help in investigating the mess as well. "There are a couple of characters in the DC Universe who are very time-space continuum-aware, and they will be the point men for this. One of them is Metron of the New Gods, who uses the Moebius Chair to traverse space and time quite easily. The other is Waverider, who will form our connection to the 'Armageddon 2001' stuff," Jurgens says, referring to DC's massive summer 1991 crossover.

"The Linear Men, as sort of the time cops monitoring things, are among the first to notice that something is wrong. They [gather] the heroes. And the response, as we have noted, is, 'Yeah, but this is time. You want us to fix a volcano? That's tangible, we can handle it. Fixing time starts to get mystical and ethereal. How do we do it?'"

Even after the time-spanning characters convince the heroes that something can be done, there's another problem, Jurgens reports. "You have two Barbara Gordons. One of them is from a different timeline. Which one? They both say they belong there. How do the heroes decide which is right and which is wrong? Who do they get rid of and how? What happens when heroes they've never even heard of show up?

"That's where some of the 'Zero Hour' crossovers come into play," Jurgens continues. "In *Superman*, I'm doing a story in which Ma and Pa Kent get some unexpected visitors—Jor-El and Lara," Superman's real parents. As they explain in their own words, "'We're looking for our son, Kal. We sent him here years ago when we thought our planet was going to explode, but it didn't. We want to bring him home now.' Superman now has a struggle: stay or go? We know which timeline is 'real,' but if he has the opportunity to choose, what will he do? That's the kind of intensely personal story we need to make *Zero Hour* work."

Jurgens insists that he doesn't want *Zero Hour* to be a "continuity encyclopedia. "It's gotta be a story, and that means the characters have to be important and the transitions they have to go through must be important to [those] who are left."

Players and Problems

Despite appearances, Jurgens says the Linear Men were not created in anticipation of *Zero Hour*. "I did those because I like time travel stories. As a writer, it gives you a lot to play with," he notes. "Time travel can be intensely confusing, and it should never be used as something that can cheat the reader, but done well, time travel stories are always a lot of fun. Since I became aware of *Zero Hour*, I began to portray the Linear Men and Waverider in a way that would be consistent with what we do now. Waverider plays a strong role in the *Superman/Doomsday* mini-series. That's where we start to see the transition of the character."

DC has been having problems with the nature of time and time travel almost since the conclusion of *Crisis on Infinite Earths*. Originally, it was decided that time travel had been too easy in the pre-*Crisis* universe, and a set of rules were devised that were supposed to make time travel a difficult proposition. It was proposed (notably in the eight-issue *Time Masters* mini-series) that there are only three ways to travel in time, and that each person can only use each method once.

"Those rules will be gone after *Zero Hour*," Jurgens proclaims. "Back when I was doing *Booster Gold*, the rules for time travel were cooked up by others and handed down from on high. Almost as soon as those rules were created, people were looking for ways to break them. They were meant to put a limit on time travel in the DC Universe, which had gotten too easy—but sometimes you go too far the other way. Hardcore rules like that are an immediate challenge for a writer to try and break.

"What we want out of this is to make time travel more difficult, which we've done—but right now we have a bunch of real bush-league characters who can travel through time at the drop of a hat...and that will be addressed in *Zero Hour* as well."

...and the ultimate Detective thought he had it all figured out.

Speaking of time-related problems to be addressed in *Zero Hour*, what about Monarch, the future dictator from "Armageddon 2001" who was supposed to be DC's new world-class villain? No one—creator or fan—was happy with the idea when Monarch first appeared, but people should be pleased with the character's part in *Zero Hour*. "The nature of Monarch will be resolved in *Showcase '94* #8 and #9, coming out just before *Zero Hour*; he will be reshaped, repainted, retooled.

"It was a mistake—one of DC's dumbest characters, Hank Hall, becomes a world-class, world-dominating villain? I don't think so. It couldn't have happened that way; it's not logical. Most people know Monarch was supposed to be Captain Atom. There are ways to resolve this...and the solution we've come up with is a lot like what was supposed to see print in the first place."

Monarch was indeed supposed to be Captain Atom, but Jurgens intimates that leaks to the media from sources inside DC caused the surprise climax to *Armageddon 2001* #2 to be

The Flash family will undergo some "transition." Here's a sneak peek at the cover to *Flash* #0.

FLASH IN THE PAN

Flash dies in *Zero Hour*...and history is repeating itself.

Wally West faces the ultimate challenge—and succumbs—in *Zero Hour*, and a new speedster is on the way. Bart Allen, Wally West's third cousin and the grandson of Barry Allen, will become Keystone City's primary speedster, the hero Impulse.

Flash editor Brian Augustyn cryptically explains. "The Flash dies...sort of. I prefer to say Wally meets his fate. He moves to a point in the future when the big 'kaboom' happens. Time periods simply cease to exist, and Wally is trapped in the middle of one of them. He'll meet a very similar fate to [that of] Barry Allen—and it's a pretty doggone final fate. Wally struggles to undo the damage Extant and the time problems do, but no matter what Flash does, he just can't outrun time."

Augustyn says that after "Zero Hour," whoever's wearing the Flash costume will be in serious trouble. In "Terminal Velocity," a five-issue storyline leading up to the critical *Flash #100*, Augustyn says, Flash—whoever he is—makes incredible discoveries about the nature and source of his powers, and the fates of all those who've worn the lightning before him. The editor claims that no one will guess what's coming.

"Max Mercury, who is *much* more than he seems, will play a major role in 'Terminal Velocity,'" Augustyn says. "We're definitely up to something. If you've been following *Flash*, you know we've introduced Bart Allen, who for all intents and purposes is the new Kid Flash. If all traditions follow, I would infer, but not imply, that Bart is being set up as Wally's successor."

Bart's powers may kill him, Augustyn notes. His grandmother, Iris West-Allen, decides that Wally is the key to Bart's survival, since it would be too painful for her to go into the past and get Barry to help. (However, Augustyn hints, she still might have to reach Barry.) Iris knows that she only has a very small window of time to reach Wally—the most crucial period in Wally West's history.

"In the 30th century," Augustyn explains, "Bart's speed kicked in at birth. They diagnosed it immediately and treated him with psionics and virtual reality. Bart's educated, but he's chronologically only about two years old, and he's no good at interacting with people, since he's never had anyone to interact with. His whole life's been a video game. He has no sense of danger whatsoever, since whenever he got into trouble, it was just 'game over.'"

Is this the final chapter in the Flash legend? Augustyn says no.

"Closing the chapter sounds too final. Let's just say that we are definitely going to turn the page," he says mysteriously. "No matter who wears the costume, there will always be a Flash in the DC Universe."

—Gary St. Lawrence

"One of the things that has happened in comics today is that we have made it an impenetrable hobby for new readers. Every time they grab a series for the first time, it's in the middle of an eight-part storyline. It's hard to get into a series that way." —Dan Jurgens

altered so that Hank Hall (aka Hawk of Hawk and Dove fame) became Monarch instead.

Zeroing In On Change

DC's plans for its mainstream books are set in stone as far as the numbering of its titles goes. The month after Zero Month, the issue numbering for each series will continue from where it left off. Jurgens says, tongue at least partly in cheek, that he originally suggested beginning each series anew with a #1 issue, replacing the DC logo, and renaming the company.

Renumbering, like Jurgens's other renovations, had some drawbacks, among them the potential for confusion. "Let's say you have all the Batman and Superman books which run with the same numbering system concurrently. That could get slightly awkward..." Even so, Jurgens declares, "If it were my sole decision, it was something I would've gone for.

"But at the same time, a new numbering system could cheat the fans a little bit. For example, *Action Comics* just celebrated issue #700; *Detective Comics* will hit #700 in about two years. It would be kind of a shame not to have a *Detective* #700. I think those high numbers indicate something positive in the long run about those books being there that long. I don't care if it's a #2000 issue: if you give kids something worth reading, they'll [buy it]. You get a cheap, quick sales fix out of all #1s. But I think the #0 issues [are] a viable and good alternative."

Jurgens says that the Zero Month was also a part of his proposal from the very beginning. "In my very first proposal for *Zero Hour*, I said it was a way for us to get new fans aboard the DC Universe. One of the things that has happened in comics today is that we have made it an impenetrable hobby for new readers," he opines. "Every time they grab a series for the first time, it's in the middle of an eight-part storyline. It's hard to get into a series that way. On Superman, we try fairly often to provide storylines where readers can get on board and not walk into the middle of a totally confusing situation.

"I wanted *Zero Hour* to be fashioned so that the entire DC Universe would have a clean start at the end of it," he continues. "That doesn't mean every character starts off with his first adventure in #1 of a new title; it only has to be that the reader gets a clear understanding of what story is starting here and why.

"I put together a memo that went to all the editors and writers that said, 'Your #0 issue should be an essential story to that character; something new should happen, something should come out of it. It shouldn't be the 15th time Popsicle Man comes to your hero's city. Make it new, establish a direction. For some characters, it will clearly be an origin issue; for some, it's not necessary. But this should be the one story you do where you couldn't erase the character's name at the top of the page and substitute a different one.'

"If you're writing Batman that month, you shouldn't be able to change this into a Daredevil script with a few superficial changes. Believe me, that happens in this business! 'This story should explain who your character is, why your character is, what his relationships are.' Then the reader can decide if they like [the character] and want to read your book."

The Quick and the Dead

We have a warning now for anyone planning to don a red suit and run real fast in the DC Universe: don't get involved in major crossovers. "There will be an element of 'weeding out' to *Zero Hour*," Jurgens reports. "As we try to make things as clear as possible, there will be some thinning of the ranks. It won't be just the redundant characters that will be eliminated, either. By the time this interview sees print, the word will be out that Flash bites the dust in *Zero Hour* #4, and I don't think of Wally West as a redundant character. There will also be some big character changes and transitions and events that make this worth reading. If it's just redundant characters who are affected, people won't care—nor should they.

"I don't want to leave the idea that we're going into *Zero Hour* with a body count in mind," he asserts. "I use the term 'transitional event' and I suddenly sound like a government bureaucrat. But it's probably an appropriate term. Looking at the places where we have problems—Hawkman, the Legion, Justice Society—that's the right phrase to explain

how we're approaching these situations.

"I once said, 'If it takes you three single-spaced, typed pages to explain your character's history, you've got a problem.' We have to clarify this stuff. Batman works because it's so easy to explain who he is. Same with Superman—the best characters work that way, including Spider-Man and the Fantastic Four."

And so a major aspect of this "transitional event" is Flash's death. Why kill Flash—the Wally West Flash—eight years after the Barry Allen Flash's death in *Crisis*? "We have an awareness that we always have to move ahead. Right now, for example, Superman has had his day in the sun, Batman has had his, we've seen what's happening with Green Lantern. We may or may not like what happened to Hal Jordan, but the job now is to make Kyle Rayner the best GL we can. Let's give this generation's readers the coolest Green Lantern we can—something they see first-hand, that they can get in on.

"With the Flash, it was the sense of the editorial and creative teams—and this was their decision—that it was time to get the Flash to the next level...and this is how they wanted to do it. There will be a new character in the superspeed suit...and the current Flash team will have their chance to make it new and exciting." (For more on the future of Flash, see the sidebar.)

So *Zero Hour* aims to straighten out everybody's history and give everyone a fresh start with a #0 issue. But even if it accomplishes all of that, could it be considered an unqualified success without teaching readers about DC's overall history? Not in Jurgens's mind.

"One of the things I'm real proud of—and it's not done yet, so I can't promise it'll come off 100 percent—is that in our last issue we plan to have a gatefold back cover," Jurgens says. "You remember those 'history of man' charts, with an ameba on the far left and modern man on the far right, with everything else in between, spaced appropriately? We're going to do the DC Universe equivalent, with the big bang on the left and the most recent DC characters on the right. So we'll put everybody in order, with the generational changes in place. Except for the JSA characters, there will be no specific dates tied to anything."

And Justice For All?

Ahh, the Justice Society of America, comicdom's most beloved World War II veterans. "We will deal with the JSA with some degree of finality, because it has to be linked to World War II. It's not one of those things we can get slipshod about.... I can't see JSA flashbacks taking place in Vietnam.

"We've cheated our way around this long enough. These guys are at least 80 years old. By keeping them young, we're making the Silver Age characters seem too old. We now have three clear delineations in DC heroes, three generations: the Golden Age, the Silver Age, and the current heroes. Let's come out and say that. If we keep trying to cheat, it just makes the problem worse."

Can of Worms on Infinite Earths: will *Zero Hour* answer all the questions raised by *Crisis*?

That acknowledgment—that there are three generations of DC Comics heroes—leads to another question: will there eventually be a fourth generation? Jurgens expects one to come along someday.

"Even before *Crisis* was done, DC was talking about extensive renovations on its three major characters," Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman. "All things considered, I hope no one has to come back and do this again in four or five years—but I expect someone will in 10 years," he admits. "That's the nature of the beast. They'll say, 'Hell, Jurgens screwed up. Now we've gotta go back and fix it because Jurgens didn't do this.'

"It's a question of this weird trap called continuity. Ten years from now, Oliver Queen and Kyle Rayner will be older, but we'll still be trying to keep Clark Kent and Bruce Wayne comparatively young; we'll always have that struggle. When Julie Schwartz came up with the Silver Age heroes, he had the convenience that everything had been gone for [a few years]. The greatest thing to do with *Zero Hour* would be to end it and have no DC comics for about six months; I don't know if that was seriously considered because, ultimately, the books have to bring in revenue.

"Julie never had to give a nod to the past unless he wanted to. Someday I think Marvel or DC will do that again, have that clean-cut restart along the line. Marvel has the same problem. As fans, we want to hang on to some of what happened in the past, but that requires retooling as we go along."

Jurgens is a fan of continuity, but he also recognizes its limitations. "I have problems with intertitle continuity and I don't. Back in the '60s, if you read *Batman, Detective Comics, World's Finest,* and *The Brave and the Bold,* it could seem like you weren't ever reading the same character. That was too wildly inconsistent. There was a part of me that wanted to believe in a consistent, coherent universe. It didn't have to be that every major event in one book had to be a major event in all the others—but a one-panel reference to it would be cool.

"It's like seeing Bob Newhart show up on *Murphy Brown* and having his secretary Carol working for her," he comments, referring to the recent television series "crossover" between the old *Bob Newhart Show* and *Murphy Brown.* "It's neat to believe that Bob and Emily [his wife] live in the same world as Murphy Brown.

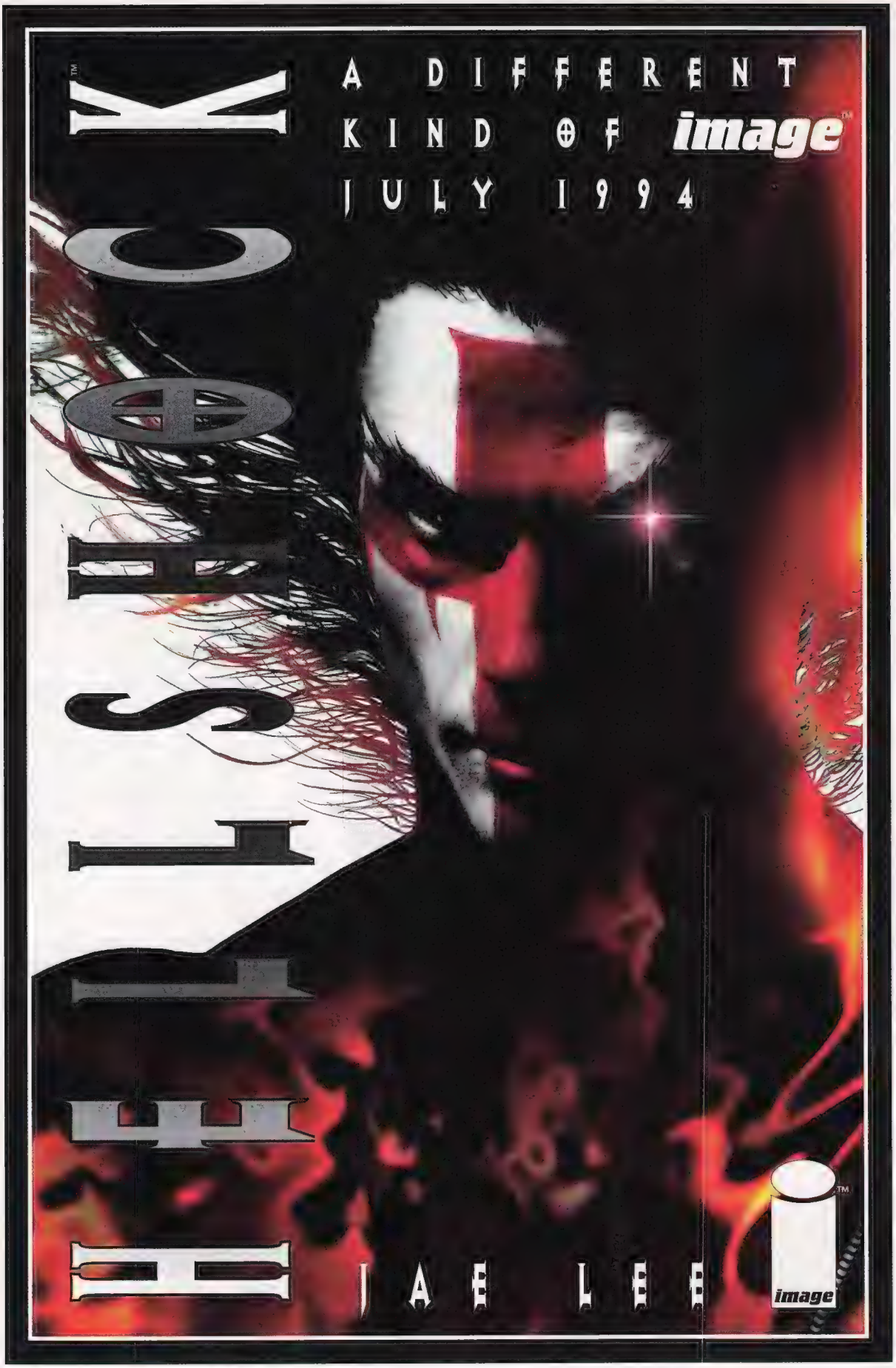
"From a pure writing [standpoint], it would be nice not to have to deal with intertitle continuity; there's a way to do it that doesn't hit the reader over the head, where they don't have to go out and buy 18 DC books a month to understand everything, but is still consistent for the people who do. There's a balance that can be found."

The Final Countdown

As for the ultimate fate of the DC Universe: Jurgens will blow it apart at the climax of *Zero Hour* #1 and resurrect it in #0. Who will resurrect it, and how? "Well...that's something I'll keep quiet," the creator laughs.

Jurgens says that he'll try to be involved in the post-*Zero Hour* DC Universe. "On some of the characters, I'll let my feelings be known," he says. "But no one has to listen to me. Ultimately, it's up to the individual books' editors and writers. We'll see what happens."

In short, Jurgens says, the whole idea behind *Zero Hour* is "to position the books so there is something new and exciting and creative to look forward to. It's not just to use *Zero Hour* to 'make things right'—it's to make things right and then kick it off from there." ☆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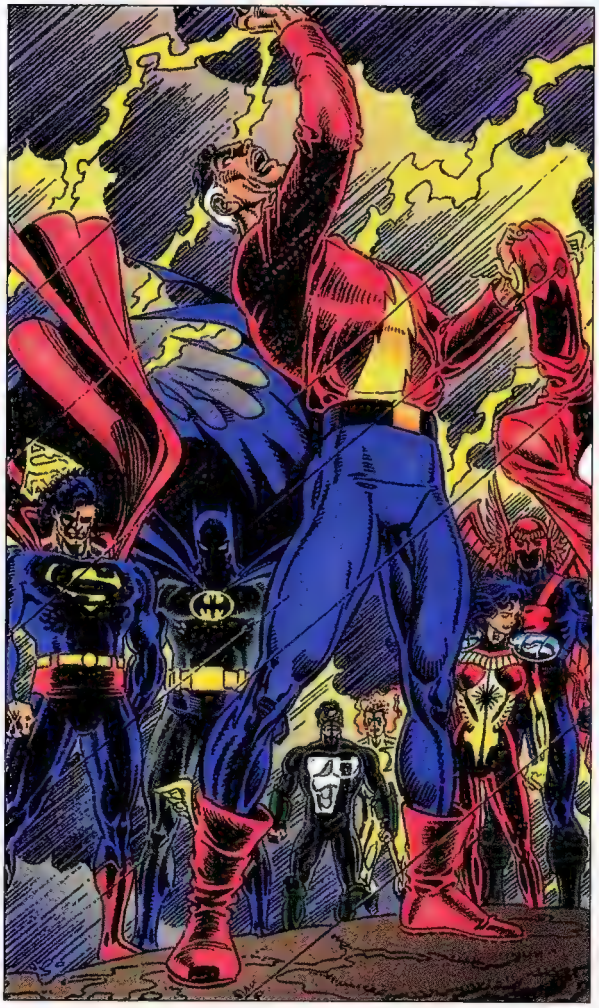

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Grand Prize (One winner)

Zero Hour #4-#0 and all the "Zero Hour" tie-ins, including *Action* #703, *Adv. of Superman* #516, *Anima* #7, *Batman* #511, *Batman: SOTB* #31, *Catwoman* #14, *Damage* #6, *Darkstars* #24, *Detective* #678, *Flash* #94, *Green Arrow* #90, *Green Lantern* (vol. 3) #55, *Guy Gardner* #24, *Hawkman* #13, *JLA* #92, *JLI* (vol. 2) #68, *JLTF* #16, *L.E.G.I.O.N. '94* #70, *Legion of Super-Heroes* (vol. 4) #61, *Legionnaires* #18, *Outsiders* (vol. 2) #11, *Robin* #10, *Showcase '94* #10, *Steel* #8, *Superboy* #8, *Superman* (vol. 2) #93, *Superman: TMOS* #37, *Team Titans* #24, and *Valor* #23 as well as all the DC #0 books slated to ship from August 16, 1994, to September 6, 1994;
Crisis on Infinite Earths #1-#12 and all the crossover issues, including *All-Star Squadron* #50-#53, #55, & #60; *Blue Devil* #17-#18, *DC Comics Presents* #86-#88 & #94, *Firestorm* #41-#42, *Green Lantern* (vol. 2) #194-#198, *Infinity Inc.* #18-#25 & *Annual* #1, *JL of A* #244-#245 & *Annual* #3, *Legion of Super-Heroes* (vol. 3) #16 & #18, *Losers Special* #1, *New Teen Titans* (vol. 2) #13-#14, *Omega Men* #31, *Superman* (vol. 1) #413-#415, *Swamp Thing* (vol. 2) #44 & #46, and *Wonder Woman* (vol. 1) #327-#329;
and some other cheery books, including:
Batman #426-#429 (the death of Robin II);
Batman #491-#500, *Batman: SOTB* #16-#18, *Detective* #659-#666, and *Showcase '93* #7-#8 (Batman gets beat up and quits);
Action #683-#684, *Adv. of Superman* #496-#497, *JLA* #69, *Superman* (vol. 2) #73-#75, and *Superman: TMOS* #17-#19 (the death of Superman);
and *Green Lantern* (vol. 3) #48-#50 (Green Lantern goes nuts and murders his friends, colleagues, and enemies).
Ahhh...what fun.

SO...WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO ENTER THIS SNAZZY CONTEST? NEXT TO NOTHING. ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS FILL OUT THAT OFFICIAL ZERO HOUR GIVEAWAY ENTRY FORM BELOW, MOISTEN A STAMP (HOWEVER YOU WANT), AND MAIL THE WHOLE THING OFF TO:

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Hey...get a move on! Time runs out on August 8, 1994—that's the last day we can receive your entries!

The Fine Print

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, their immediate families, and anyone who screws around with the time stream. Print your name, address, city, state, zip code, age, and telephone number with area code on the official entry form, a three-by-five-inch index card, or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry to Zero Hour Giveaway, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become the property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winner. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the name of the contest winner and are not transferable. The prizes do not include any premium special editions, unless a book was printed only in a regularly released premium special edition. If any regularly released book published by September 1994 that is or was a direct part of the "Crisis on Infinite Earths," "Death in the Family," "Emerald Twilight," "Knightfall," "Zero Hour," or death of Superman storylines that was not included in the list of prizes above is discovered within six months of the winner's receipt of the prizes, that book will be made available to the contest winner. After the six-month period has expired, Wizard Press will not contribute any further prizes to the contest winner. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. Y'know, yogurt is really sour milk. That's really weird. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by August 8, 1994.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winners will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on August 9, 1994, by Wizard Press.

For the name of the winner, available after August 31, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Zero Hour Winner, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just keep reading *Wizard*!

CONTEST Zero Hour Giveaway

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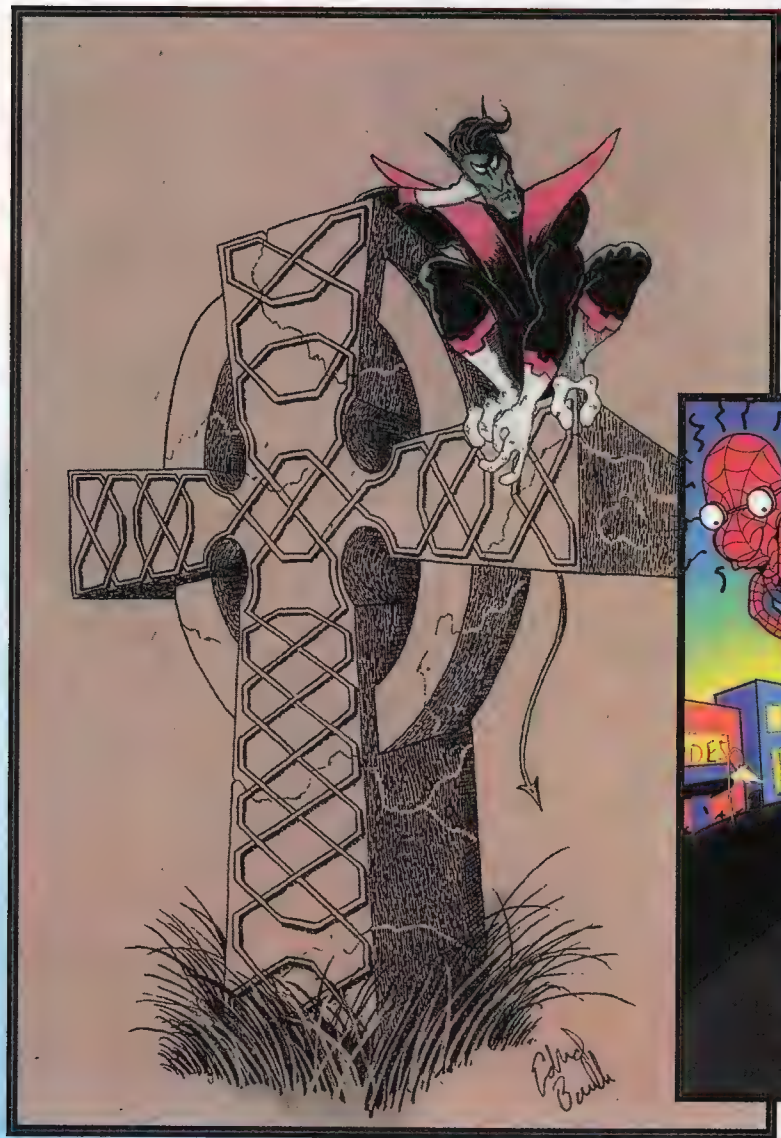
the Drawing board

The showcase of comic book fan art.

The 10 people whose artwork got an honorable mention this month will receive a *Maxx* #3 signed by Sam Kieth, a *Brigade* #0 signed by Jeff Matsuda, and a *WildStar* #1 signed by Al Gordon and Jerry Ordway. The four runners-up will receive an *X-Men* (vol. 2) #28 signed by Andy Kubert, a Gold *Bloodshot* #0 signed by Joe Quesada, and an *Axis Alpha* signed by Larry Stroman, Todd Johnson, and Jim Callahan. The artist of the winning entry this month will receive an *X-Men* (vol. 2) #30 signed by Andy Kubert and Matt Ryan, a *Beavis & Butt-Head* #1 signed by Rick Parker and Mike Lackey, a Gold *X-O Manowar* #0 signed by Joe Quesada, a *Rune* #1 signed by Barry Windsor-Smith, and a *Lethal Foes of Spider-Man* #1 signed by Brad Vancata. Congratulations to all!

DF DYNAMIC FORCES™ Special thanks to Dynamic Forces for their generous donation of autographed comic books. You guys are the dukes of New York, you're A-#1!



1st Place!

NIGHTCRAWLER
By Edward Bourelle
Tipp City, OH

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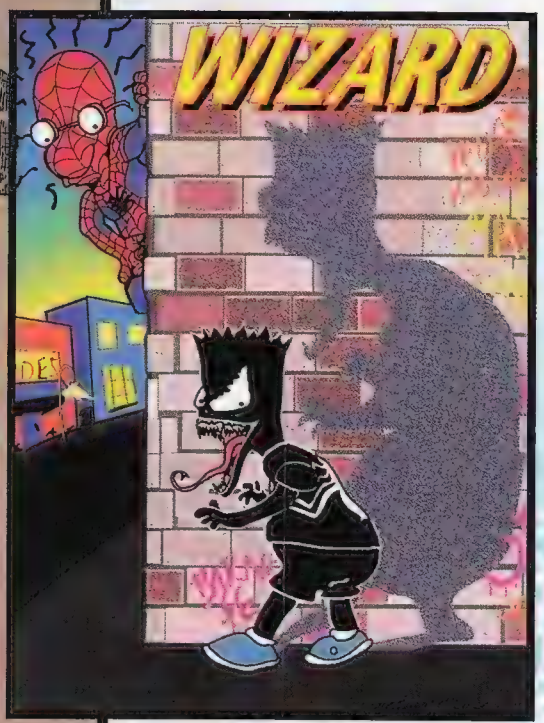
SPIDER-MILHOUSE vs. BART-VENOM
By Mitchell A.S. Hallock
Branford, CT



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RUNNER-UP

SPAWN vs.BATMAN
By Arlindo Yip Sou
Lisboa, Portugal

VAMPIRELLA vs. BONE
By Joel R. Steudler
Pittsburgh, PA

CEREBUS
By John Eloe
Manchaca, TX

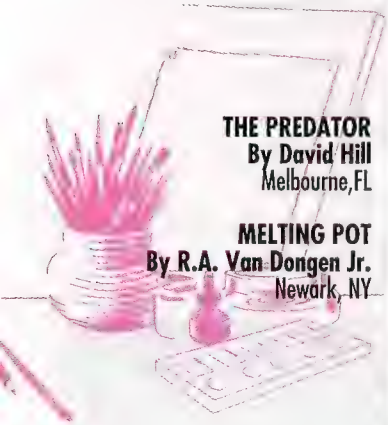
Vampirella ™ & © Harris Publications Inc. Bone ™ & © Jeff Smith.

Cerebus ™ & © 1994 Dave Sim

Hellboy ™ & © 1994 Michael Mignola

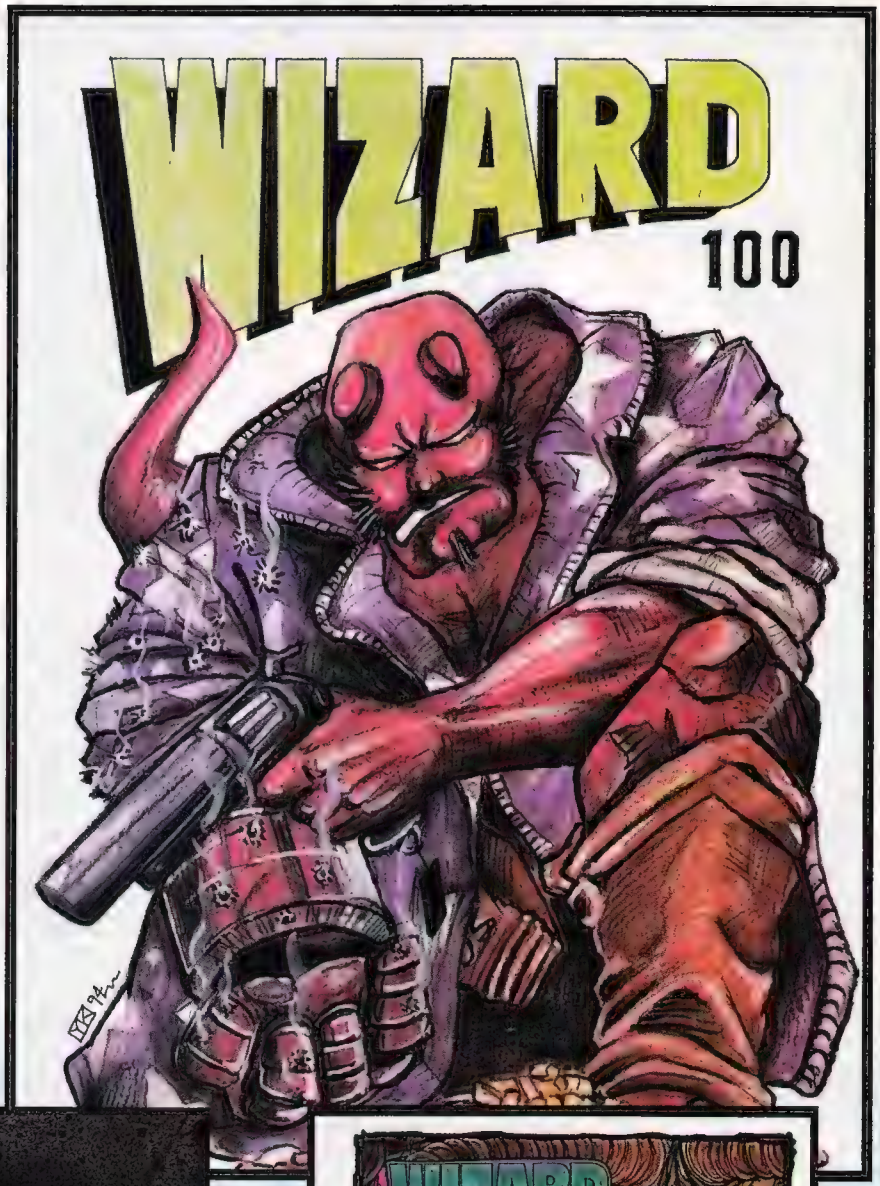
RUNNER-UP

HELLBOY
By Kung Yuan Ket
Selangor, West Malaysia



THE PREDATOR
By David Hill
Melbourne, FL

MELTING POT
By R.A. Van Dongen Jr.
Newark, NY



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Melting Pot ™ & © Kevin Eastman

Harley Quinn ™ & © DC Comics

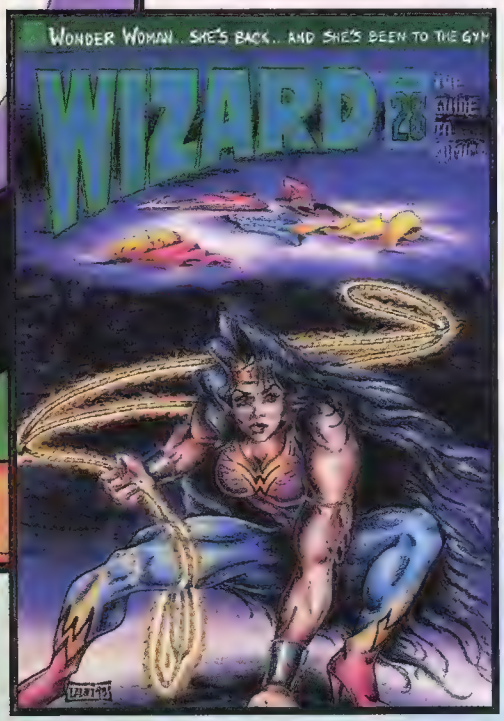
RUNNER-UP

HARLEY QUINN
By Bill McEvoy
Rowland Heights, CA

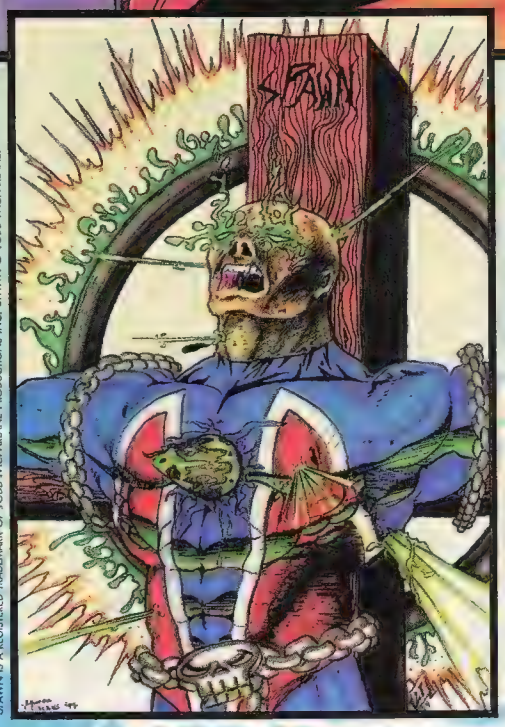
WONDER WOMAN
By Lauri Dansereau
Wappingers Falls, NY

WOLVERINE vs. THE MAXX
By Eirich Olson
Denver, CO

SPAWN
By Junxiong Li, Corey Mitchell, and Ed Muren
South Elgin, IL



Wonder Woman ™ & © DC Comics



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Wolverine ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group. The Maxx ™ & © Sam Kieth.

These super-cute X-Babies ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

RUNNER-UP

X-BABIES
By Eri Lamuel & Adi Darda
Jakarta Timur, Indonesia

ANIMANIACS
By Jim Leyshon
Denver, CO

THE VIOLATOR
By Brian Syswerda
Middleville, MI

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The Violator ™ & © Todd McFarlane Productions

Entries for The Drawing Board should be sent to:
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Submissions can be on any form of unlined paper or posterboard, and can be in any medium (oils, crayon, line art, bloody finger, etc.). Neon inks will not print. Artwork must not be larger than 8" x 11-1/4". Do not fold, bend, or roll artwork. Mail flat to avoid damage. Please enclose your name and full address. All entries are nonreturnable and become property of Wizard Press. Employees of Wizard Press are the sole judges of the contests, and all decisions are final. Good luck!

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Hunk & Babe of the month

Babe ™ & © John Byrne

Babe — BABE

Whoah! John Byrne knew what he was talking about when he dubbed this titillating tomato Babe. Lookit those legs! those eyes! those... Well, you can see for yourself that this lady is first-rate. It's a shame that *Danger Unlimited*, Byrne's first made-for-Legend title, was canceled, but the premiere of *Babe* certainly softens the blow. So whatzit about? Well, an agent named Ralph Rowan, P.O.ed after not making any deals at a Hollywood party, goes rippin' down a highway and almost hits a butt-nekkid Babe (I gotta get the name of that highway). After rescuing her from a scummy Hollywood type, Ralph starts her on the path to stardom. But then these gruesome-lookin' aliens show up, and...well, *Babe* #1's on sale now—check it out for yourself. She alone is worth the price of admission.

Hunk — ECLIPSO

I never really thought of an embodiment of the wrath of God as a hunk before, but hey, check out how buff this purple dude is! And just how does he get his teeth so Pepsodent white? That's not a question meant for mere mortals, so we'll stick to why babes dig him. First off, is he tough? You betcha. He beat Moses two times outta three in thumb wrestling. Second, does he know how to have fun? Hell, yeah—he built a sprawling gazebo on the moon, possessed a whole bunch of superheroes, and proceeded to beat the tar out of the DC Universe. Are there any drawbacks? Other than the fact that he was recently wiped out of existence by the Spectre, no; this guy's a 10! ☆

Eclipso ™ & © DC Comics

She's got Cindy's eyes, Elle's legs, Christy's hair, and Ali's left hook!

John Byrne's

BABE™

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Takin' on the world with a wink and a smile this July!
If she can't get you to Make The Break, no one can!

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Aloha! Welcome to another Brutes & Babes. This month, we continue our fun look at perspective. A quick word: if you find perspective frustrating, if nothing clicks, then find a book on perspective and read it. If that doesn't work, write in with a question; maybe I can clear up a problem if you tell me what you're having trouble with. Send in your perspective drawings, too, if you're doing any—and I hope that you are.

BRUTES & BABES

DRAWING POWERFUL COMICS WITH

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TWO-POINT PERSPECTIVE

SECTION 1:

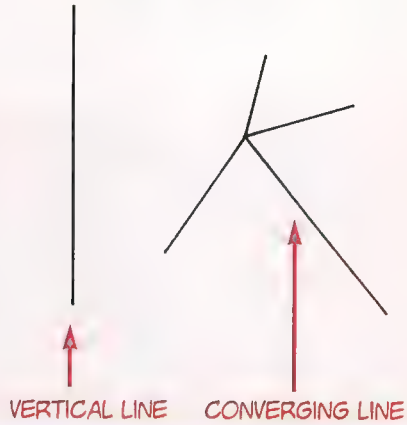
On this page are some familiar drawings from last issue. What follows here are definitions for those drawings as they apply to two-point perspective...

There are basically two types of lines in two-point perspective. Only two—that's all you'll ever need to draw. They are vertical lines and converging lines. Let's look at the definitions of these two things and move on from there...

Vertical: in a position or direction perpendicular to the plane of the horizon; upright.
Converging: (also convergent) to tend to meet in a point; to tend to a common result.

Basically, that's it. You master those two lines and you can do two-point perspective. Actually, if you master converging lines, you can do two- and three-point perspective—but we'll get into that in later issues. (Y'know, for some reason, this seems sooo familiar...)

We're starting with the simple basics—types of lines—and we'll build from there. To help learn about perspective, you should start thinking about the streets on which you walk, the rooms in which you sit, the pictures at which you look. Try to pick out the perspective, try to find the vanishing points on the horizon lines—it will make learning about using perspective a lot easier in the long run.



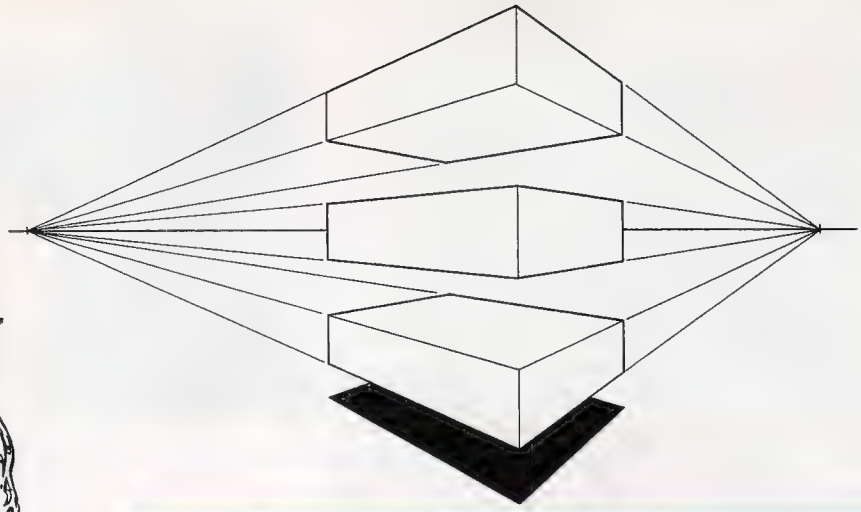
SECTION 2: THE HORIZON

As you might have guessed, the horizon is related to horizontal lines. **Horizon:** the line or circle that forms the apparent boundary between the earth and sky.

Note the picture to the top left. Note the viewer. As I said last issue, you will never see the viewer in any illustration other than those used to explain perspective. The viewer is an imaginary person that the illustrator creates who is looking at the scene the illustrator is illustrating. (Now that's a mouthful!) It's important to remember that the viewer is *not you*. Anyone looking at an illustration is looking at a snapshot of what the viewer (the imaginary spectator) has seen.

Note that the horizon line of any illustration runs directly through the viewer's line of sight, i.e. his eyeball. The point of view of any given illustration can be high, low, or right in the middle. With a high viewpoint, you tend to look down on things. With a low viewpoint, you tend to look up at things. With a middle viewpoint, you tend to look at things the way most people look at things (we might call this "normal perspective").

Look at the illustration to the bottom left. The viewer (our imaginary friend) looks through a piece of paper that represents the picture plane. Hmmmm, picture plane: there's a new word. **Picture plane:** an imaginary, flat piece of glass through which the imaginary viewer looks. Pretend that the image the viewer sees is burned into the glass, and that the glass becomes the illustration.



SECTION 3:

Study the three floating boxes above...

OK, now that you've done that, let's discuss what you were looking at. Those three boxes were drawn in two-point perspective. Two-point perspective simply means that there are two separate points of convergence on the horizon line, which as you can see is parallel to the top and bottom levels of every basic shape. Note that the sides of all the boxes are constructed with vertical lines that are, of course, all parallel to one another and perpendicular to the horizon line.

Unlike one-point perspective, when an object is drawn in two-point perspective, it has a bit more realism and life. Lines of convergence are becoming verrrrry important, so pay attention.

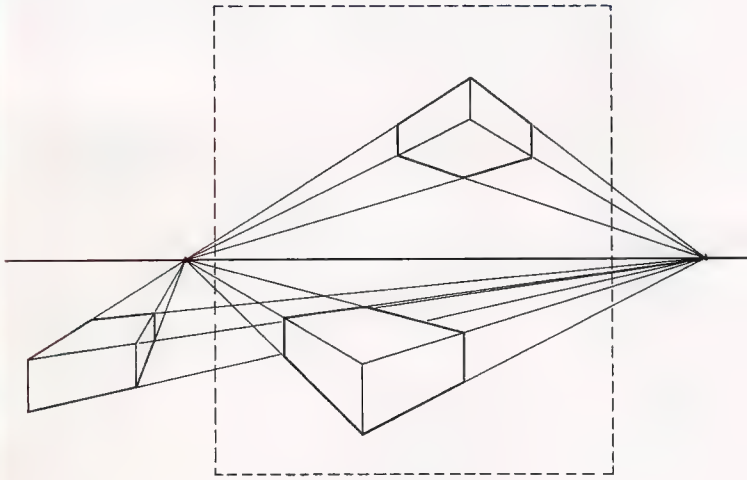
SECTION 4: WHAT IT IS

Look at the illustration to your right. I hope it further demonstrates how two-point perspective works. Once again, note that all the vertical lines are parallel (that kind of goes without saying) and that there are two vanishing points, towards which all the lines in the drawing except the vertical lines converge.

Actually, in two-point perspective you could have a hundred vanishing points placed right on the horizon, but don't panic. In the future, we'll get into instances where a drawing in two-point perspective will have more than two vanishing points; for now, don't worry about it. Just recognize that it's possible, and that it won't affect the shape of any of your boxes or objects. Just keep those vertical lines parallel and all the other lines converging and you'll be doing fine.

Now take a look at the box on the left. That's sort of a two-point perspective "no-no." Note the dotted line drawn around the illustration. When you're doing two-point perspective, it's a good idea to keep your perspective points outside of your picture plane, which the dotted line represents. If you need to draw an object in simple, two-vanishing-point, two-point perspective and the object falls outside of those two points, strange and bizarre things start to happen with its shape.

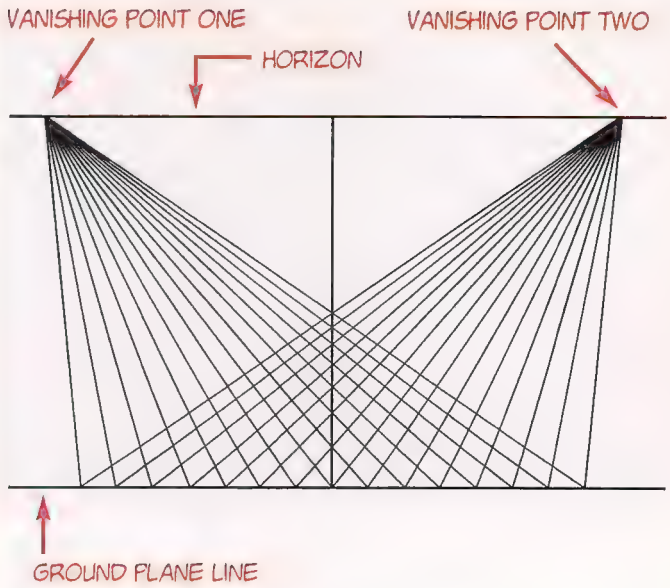
As we get deeper into perspective, I'll show you how to avoid this. But for now, keep your points *outside* of your picture plane (that is, outside of your panel) and everything will go fine for you. This basic, simple rule, of course, was made to be broken. In the coming months, I'll show you how—but for now, let's just stick with this.



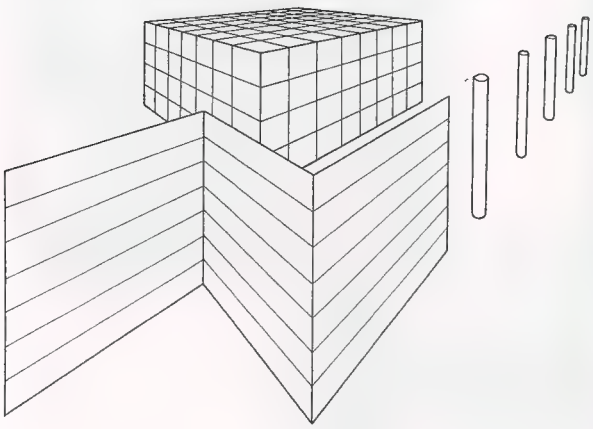
SECTION 5: GRID IT!

On the right we have a checkerboard grid drawn in two-point perspective. It's quite simple to create. First, draw a horizon line. Second, set two vanishing points on the horizon, approximately in the same areas where I have mine. Third, draw a line parallel to and below the horizon. Give yourself enough room to construct a grid between this line (which we'll call the ground plane line) and the horizon.

What you should do next is drop a vertical line from the horizon line, starting midway between the two vanishing points, and ending up at a point right in the center of your ground plane line. This vertical line will be your center-of-vision line. Next, with a ruler, mark off equal measurements along the ground plane line, say, every quarter-inch. Take a straightedge and draw lines from each measure towards vanishing point one. Then draw lines from each measure towards vanishing point two. There you have it: a two-point perspective grid. That was easy.



Thanks for that vote of confidence, Babe.



SECTION 6:

To the left we have some wall shapes with grids on them in beautiful two-point perspective. Measurements for vertical walls are easy in two-point perspective. All you need to do is, starting with your two-point perspective grid, set your ruler along a vertical line and mark off as many equidistant points as you need. Then draw a line from these measured points to the vanishing point. These lines are all perfectly proportionate in perspective.

If you need to grid a wall, just draw a diagonal line from one corner to another of your wall box. Draw a vertical line wherever the diagonal crosses one of the converging lines. Now you've got a nice grid on a vertical wall. If you do that and erase the diagonal lines, you have wall panels.

This same technique can be used to place telephone poles along a road that you draw, or any other objects you can think of that might be equidistant from one another. Note how the freestanding wall stops, and then things that look like poles stick up out of the ground all the way back to the vanishing point, all of which hopefully illustrates what I'm talking about.

There you have it. You're finished. Now *you* pop a figure in here. I did it last time—you do it this time. All of the same rules apply. Good luck—and have fun!!

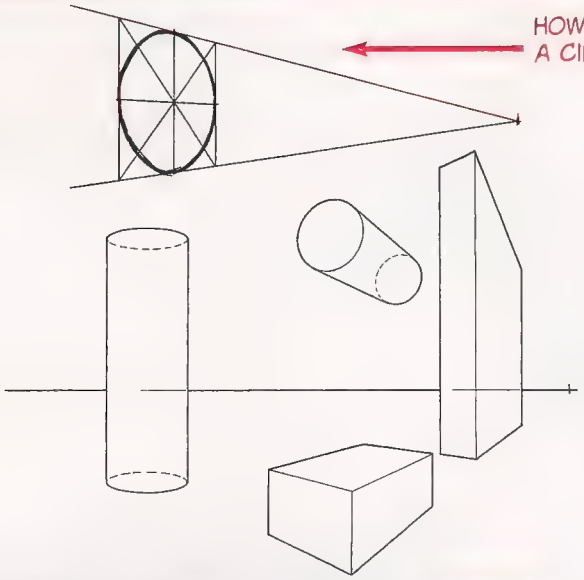
SECTION 7:

Take a look around. Look at the room you're in: look at the desk, the shelves, the bed, on the kitchen table. Look at the corners of the room or the street outside. More than likely, everything you see appears to be in two-point perspective. (This works best when you're standing up normally in an average room.) Most of the time, most everything we see looks like it's in two-point perspective. There are exceptions to this rule, but there are exceptions to every rule.

Keep looking. Do you see how two-point perspective works? Does it make sense? I hope so. The greatest skill an artist can have is that of observation. Look around yourself, see things in life as they appear, try to understand what you're seeing. Then try to recreate it on a flat, two-dimensional piece of paper; use your knowledge to depict real objects in a realistic manner.

Once you've got that down, you can take that knowledge and create things that are unreal (and unrealistic), but draw them so that they look real, so that they look like they take up form and space. That's the point of perspective: adding believability to your drawings. It's one of the basic drawing laws. And it works.

Now a little plug for next month, one that hopefully won't blow your mind too bad. In reality, there's no such thing as one-point perspective or two-point perspective. Everything everyday everywhere is always in *three-point* perspective. Chew on that and I'll explain it next month.



SECTION 8: BASIC SHAPES IN TWO POINT PERSPECTIVE

Look at the basic shapes on the left. Some of them don't look much different from how they appeared in one-point perspective last issue, though there are subtle differences. Can you pick out those differences? Shapes certainly have more life, more realism in two-point perspective; they're not so flat, not quite so boring.

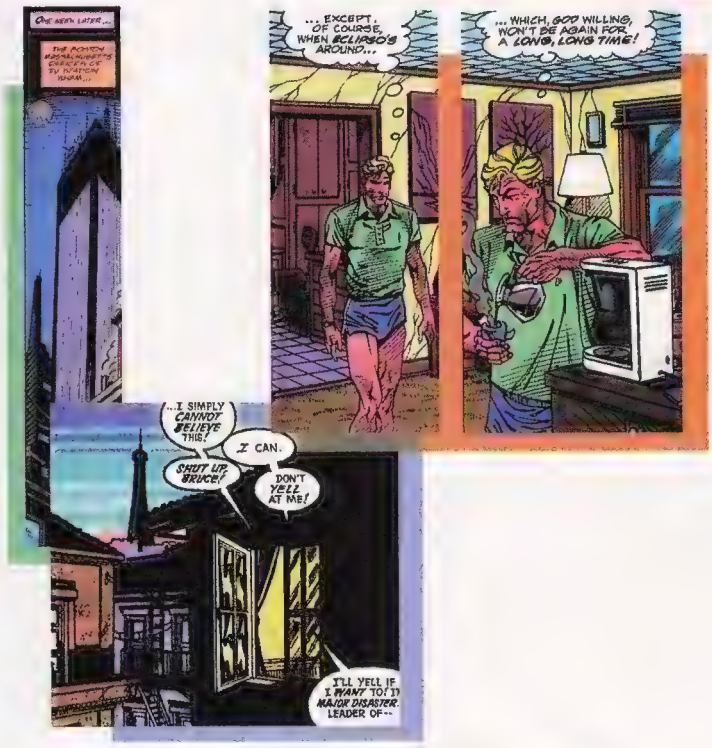
Now it's your turn. Sit down and draw these shapes in two-point perspective. You pretty much have all the knowledge you need right here to do it. The cylinders might be a little tough, so there's a small illustration that shows you how to construct a circle in perspective. (What's funny about that is that it's drawn in one-point perspective.) Knock yourself out, have some fun!

SECTION 9: EXAMPLES OF TWO POINT PERSPECTIVE

Here are a few instances of two-point perspective that appeared in actual comic books. That's pretty much how it works. Quite frankly, I really had to struggle to find illustrations to use here. Perspective is so important in comics that I think that every panel I've ever drawn has been loaded with it. Most of it shows in the figures.

Unfortunately, balloons and figures obscure so much of the background detail so much of the time that it's hard to find something that's actually just sitting there drawn in perspective. But even when a well-drawn comic doesn't have any buildings or cars drawn in perspective, the artist still utilized all his knowledge of perspective in drawing that comic. Don't sell perspective short.

Till next month, keep practicing your perspective—and above all, *keep drawing!*

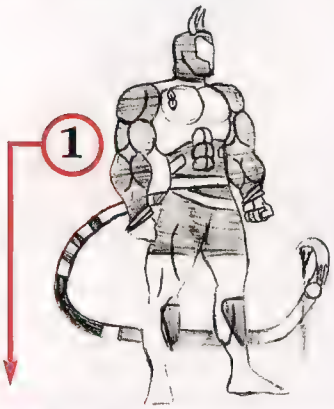


Dear Brute & Babe

Here at long last are the Scorpios submissions. I really enjoyed going through them!

Thanks to everyone who submitted a Scorpios! You all did great jobs—I wish I could have printed them all!

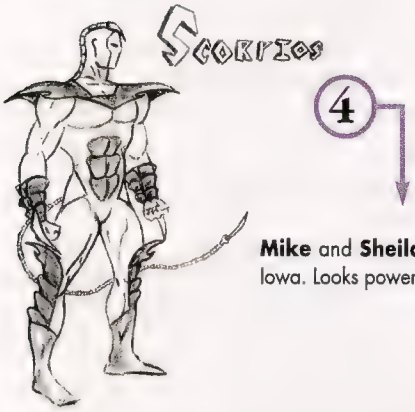
Well, there it is. It hasn't arrived in your mailbox yet, but it will. Keep looking for it. Yep, that's right—it's the Brute & Babe postcard. Sure, this one just features Brute, but that leaves room for the Babe one coming next. Thanks for your patience on this point, and watch your mail, because it's coming.



Gray Warlick, Sherwood, Ark. Good job, Gray. It's nice to see some submissions from younger readers.

Mike Grossi, Ill. Cool effect on the hand.

Ryan Odagawa, Monterey Park, Calif. It's interesting (and very politically correct) to depict Scorpios as a female. Babe loved it.



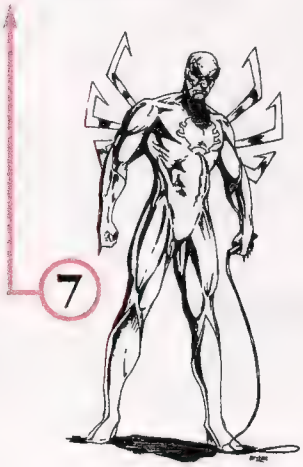
Mike and **Sheila Scharnberg**, Everly, Iowa. Looks powerful.

Ben Hall, Arlington, Texas. I like how you dropped the tail in favor of a lizard tongue.

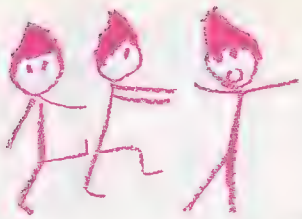
Cliff Evans, Crockett, Texas. I like the hand and boot effects on this guy.

Greg Keyzer, Greenville, N.C. Nice proportions, good inking.

Michael Gowans, Johnstown, N.Y. Neat grimace on his face—he looks fierce!



Little BRUTES & BABES

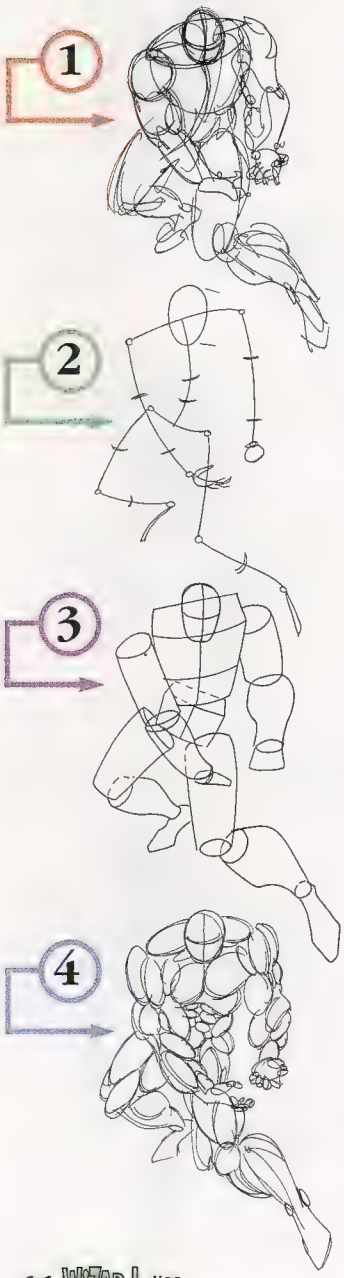


INTRODUCTION

Hi, how are you all doing? We've been looking at some figures and how they grow from basic shapes to finished superheroes, and I hope it's been clear enough for you to follow. I'm going to try something a little different this month: I want to see if I can help you put two and two together to get to that lovely four. Give it a whirl. Write in with your questions and send in drawings; I'll be happy to answer them and help you out as best as I can.

SECTION 1:

On the right we have a cool finished drawing of Brute looking tough and angry. "Sure, that's cool," you say, "but how in tarnation will I ever draw that?" Well, let's try it. First, study the other four drawings on the page.



DRAWING ONE: Here we have a really basic shape-figure in the pose we were thinking of for Brute. It's kind of goopy, kind of gummy, kind of roly, kind of poly—but note that it's essentially the same pose as Brute's.

This is what Brute is derived from: simple basic shapes. A couple of circles, a few cubes...actually, a couple of circles, a few oblong shapes...it's real simple. Give it a try. And don't worry about getting a nice, clean, clear, posed, simple shape to start with. Just let the pencil fly around on the paper, scribble around till you come up with something you like, and build from there.

DRAWING TWO: Here's what you build from. You take that simple basic pose you've created with simple shapes and draw in some basic lines. Think of this as the skeleton of the figure. Draw a basic oval shape for the head. Now here's the tricky part: measure in some proportions.

Proportions...now there's a tricky word. **Proportion:** the comparative relation between things or magnitudes such as size, quantity, number, or the like.

To find the proportion of a figure, you have to measure it. This is kind of tough, but you can do it. What you need to do is figure out how long the arms are, how long the legs are, how long the body is, and most importantly, how the lengths and sizes of these parts relate to each other. This is the tough part. (I warned ya.)

To measure the figure, first figure out how big the head is going to be. Next, use the height of the head to measure off all the other distances. (Simple, eh?) Note the little marks on drawing two. Those are measurements taken from the head.

It's tough to measure out a figure, but just remember that no leg can be longer than it's supposed to be, so if a leg is four heads long, the other leg *can't* be five. It can be three if it's bent and receding into the distance, but it *can't* be longer. Keep that in mind, and good luck!

DRAWING THREE: Look, we're back to simple, basic shapes! Now that we've got the whole figure measured, we draw simple shapes for the arms, legs, and torso over that stick/skeleton figure, keeping in mind mass and that other dreaded concept, proportion. Remember, you have to know if your character's big or little, thick or thin, all those kinds of things. Give it a whirl!

DRAWING FOUR: Here we have a bubble muscle drawing. All the muscles are nicely layered. Now granted, this part isn't easy either. You have to know where all the muscles are, where they connect, how long they are, how big they get, and how they look in relation to everything else—all that fun stuff.

This is basically how a drawing is constructed, so practice doing it. And don't expect to do something awesome your first time out. It might take a year, it might take 10 years. But it's been my experience that someone who wants to learn a skill badly enough can usually do so if he practices enough. Don't get discouraged, just keep trying—that's the important thing. After all, it's not a race; nobody has to win. Good luck!

CONCLUSION:

Well, that ends another Little Brutes & Babes. I hope this is helping you; please let me know if it is. If you've got questions, send me a drawing with your questions written on it, and we'll try to take care of it the best we can. Till next month, thank you, and so long. But most importantly...*keep drawing!*

Brute and Babe and the Ominous Press logo ™ & © Bart Sears

HE'S ONE WITH THE EARTH...
AND THE EARTH DEMANDS JUSTICE!
A NEW BREED OF
GEOMANCER ARRIVES IN
THE GEOMANCER™
#1
BY
MAURICE FONTENOT
& RAGS MORALES
SHIPPING IN JULY FROM
VALIANT®
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CONTEST

Youngblood Sweepstakes

YES, IT'S TRUE: ROB LIEFELD, AFTER A LENGTHY HIATUS, HAS RETURNED TO THE WORLD THAT MADE HIM FAMOUS, NOT TO MENTION RICH: COMIC BOOK LAND. TO HELP CELEBRATE THIS MOMENTOUS DAY, ROB, THOSE FINE FOLKS OVER AT EXTREME STUDIOS, AND WIZARD PRESS HAVE PUT TOGETHER QUITE AN ARRAY OF PRIZES, ALL UP FOR GRABS FOR THE FANS KEEN ENOUGH TO ENTER AND WIN THIS CONTEST. SO WHAT D'YA GOTTA DO? WE'LL GET TO THAT SOON ENOUGH. OUR FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS IS THE LOOT!

Grand Prize (One winner)

A page of original framed art from *Youngblood* #6, the issue that marks Rob's return to the series that started the Image Universe!

Second Prize

(2 winners)

A set of authentic Extreme Studios apparel, consisting of an Extreme leather jacket, jersey, hooded sweatshirt, baseball cap, and dog tag!

Third Prize

(10 winners)

A set of all the standard-release comics published by Extreme Studios, from *Youngblood* #1 to *Youngblood* #6 and everything in between!

Fourth Prize

(15 winners)

A set of all the standard-release #1 and #0 books published by Extreme Studios, from *Youngblood* #1 to *Newmen* #1 and everything in between!

Fifth Prize

(25 winners)

A *Youngblood* #1: *The Silent Edition*, the word balloon-less limited edition printed on super-high-quality paper and signed by Rob Liefeld!

Sixth Prize

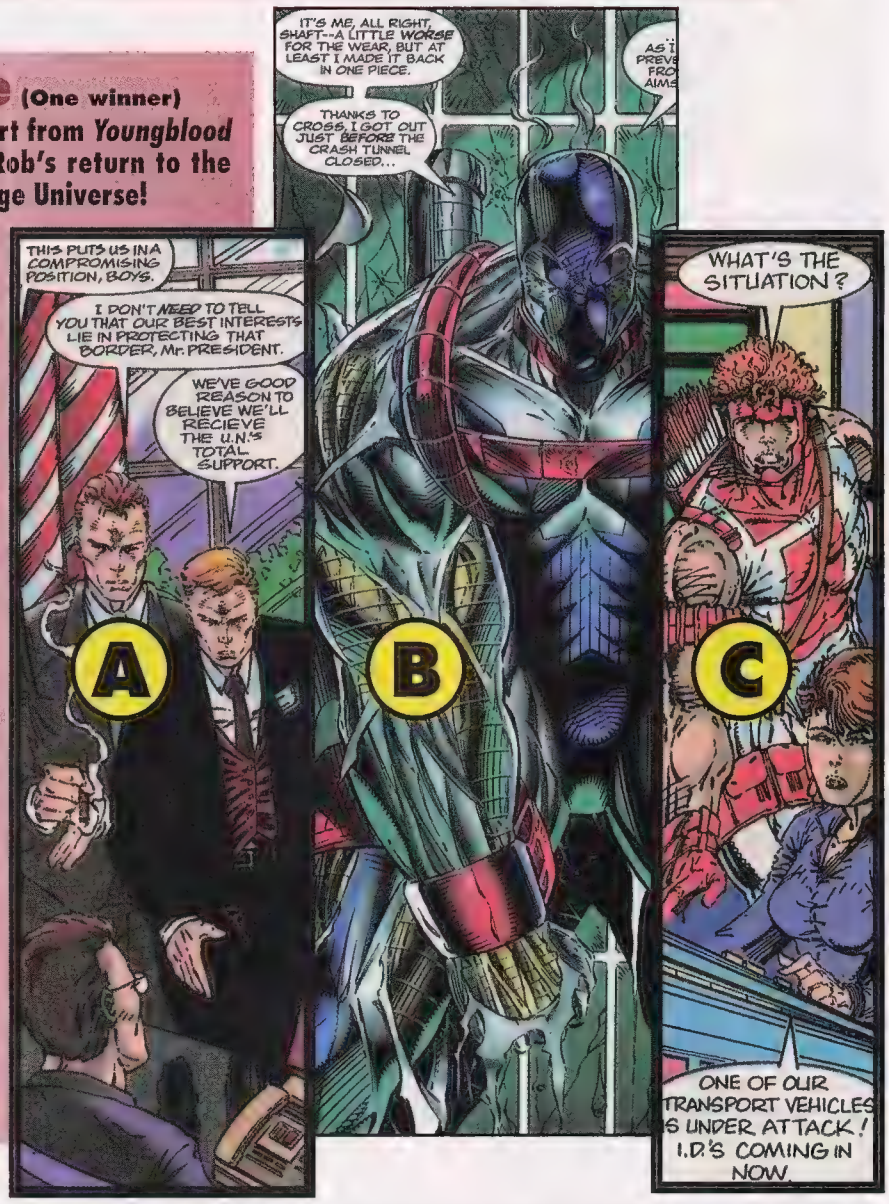
(50 winners)

A *Youngblood* #1: *The Silent Edition*.

Randomized Prize

(50 winners)

After all the contest winners have been chosen, all the winning names will go "back in bowl" (obscure movie quote) and one name will be chosen at random. The individual chosen wins, in addition to the prizes he or she has already won, the Youngblood "bonus pack," which consists of *Youngblood* #0-#6, all signed by Rob Liefeld!



HOT DAMN! MAKES YOU WANNA GET NAKED AND RUN AROUND, DOESN'T IT? DON'T DO THAT, THOUGH; YOU'D PROBABLY GET ARRESTED OR SOMETHING. ANYWAYS, THE WAY TO WIN THE WHOLE SHEBANG IS TO LOOK AT THESE SIX PANELS FROM *YOUNGBLOOD* #0-#5 AND FIGURE OUT THE EXACT ISSUE IN WHICH EACH PANEL ORIGINALLY APPEARED.

The Fine Print

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press and Extreme Studios, their immediate families, and anybody who reads fine-print legal copy. What's your problem? Print your name, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the exact issue in which each of the six *Youngblood* panels originally appeared on the official entry form, a three-by-five-inch index card, or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry to Youngblood Sweepstakes, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become the property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. The third and fourth prizes do not include any premium special editions unless a book was printed only in a premium special edition. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the name of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. Ugh. This legal nonsense goes on forever. I wonder what's on TV? **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by August 8, 1994.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The grand, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth prize winners will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on August 9, 1994, by Wizard Press. All grand, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth prize winners will be eligible for the randomized prize, which will be chosen by random drawing on August 9, 1994. All decisions are final.

For a list of winners, available after August 31, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Youngblood Winners, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just keep reading *Wizard*!

YOUNGBLOOD AND ALL ARTWORK AND CHARACTERS ™ & © ROB LIEFELD INC.

ONCE YOU'VE NAILED DOWN ALL THOSE ISSUE NUMBERS, FILL OUT THE OFFICIAL YOUNGBLOOD SWEEPSTAKES ENTRY FORM BELOW, JAM IT IN AN ENVELOPE, SLAP A STAMP ON IT, AND MAIL THE WHOLE THING OFF TO:

Youngblood Sweepstakes
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

Better start searchin'—this has gotta get where it's goin' by August 8, 1994!

CONTEST

Youngblood Sweepstakes

I am:

NAME (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) _____ AGE _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (DON'T FORGET YOUR AREA CODE) _____

My answers are:

PANEL A IS FROM *YOUNGBLOOD* #: _____ PANEL D IS FROM *YOUNGBLOOD* #: _____

PANEL B IS FROM *YOUNGBLOOD* #: _____ PANEL E IS FROM *YOUNGBLOOD* #: _____

PANEL C IS FROM *YOUNGBLOOD* #: _____ PANEL F IS FROM *YOUNGBLOOD* #: _____

WINNER!

Congratulations to the Grand Prize Winner of *Wizard* #32's Sega CD Contest.

Grand Prize Winner

Ryan Villano (age 11) Plymouth, MA

Answers:

1. *Uncanny X-Men* #309, **2.** *Batman* #504, **3.** *Amazing Spider-Man* #385, **4.** *WildC.A.T.s* #6, **5.** *Turok* #10, **6.** *Spawn* #16

CUT & PRINT

The comic insider's guide to Hollywood.

BY DAVE GALVAN

Batman III, now *Batman Forever,* will be feature Tommy Lee Jones as Two-Face and Jim Carrey as the Riddler.

The Riddler ™ & © DC Comics

BATMAN III NO MORE

The eagerly awaited third installment of Warner Bros.' Batman film outings, *Batman III,* has altered its title to *Batman Forever.* The reason for such a corny name change? It seems no one at Warner Bros. is talking. Can't say we blame 'em.

Other major changes include Tommy Lee Jones officially signing on as Harvey Dent, aka Two-Face. Jones takes over the character who last appeared in 1989's *Batman,* which was portrayed by Billy Dee Williams. Despite earlier reports, Robin Williams will not portray the Riddler in the film; published reports have Jim Carrey playing the villain. Chris O'Donnell (*The Three Musketeers*) has officially signed on to play Robin after a search for an unknown talent proved fruitless. Also in negotiations is the film's star Michael Keaton, who reportedly could bring home $13 million as Batman.

A new character, Chase Meridian, is slated to be introduced as another love interest for Bruce Wayne. She's a criminal psychologist who's—guess what?—extremely interested in the complexity of Batman.

Batman Forever is set to begin filming in September with a summer 1995 release.

FILM

Hear any news on a movie based on Marvel's Black Panther character? Rumors have been flying like crazy recently since some Hollywood trade magazines have published the news that a film called *The Black Panther* has started filming starring Mario Van Pebbles. The only problem is, the film has nothing to do with Marvel's Black Panther—it's about the 1960s Black Panther movement.

Several sources have leaked information to me regarding a possible new Punisher film. One source at Marvel has told me that they are looking into the possibility of producing either a film or TV series based on the new female Punisher who made her debut in *Punisher War Journal* #62.

Although Marvel is organizing its thoughts on the Punisher project, one source has leaked me a photo of action actress Sophia Crawford, who an interested producer wants to star in the film, if such a film is made. She has been an action star in the Hong Kong film market—a market that has its stars doing *all* of their own stunts. She's a dead ringer for the new Punisher; I have seen some fight footage of some of her movies, and this bird can scrap! She has kung fu moves that would put Van Damme to shame, and can fight her way past any man. I certainly hope that Marvel gets their act together and jumps on this project while they can.

Turner Broadcasting announced in April that *Jonny Quest* is to be the next Hanna-Barbera cartoon series to be transformed in a motion picture feature. The

film, expected to be a late-'95 or early-'96 release, is to be produced by Donner/Shuler-Donner and Robert DeNiro's Tribeca Productions.

If many fans of *The Crow* were wondering how the late Brandon Lee managed to be seen through the entire film, despite the fatal tragedy that struck him during the filming of it, the answer is simple. Dream Quest Images successfully made a digital composite of Lee's face, which was placed on the body of another actor.

Speaking of video, Disney is so confident that sales of *The Return of Jafar*, the direct-to-video sequel to Aladdin, will soar that it plans on doing a direct-to-video sequel of the just-released *The Lion King*.

Alpha Productions will release a two-issue comic book mini-series based on the film *Ruger: L.A. Bounty 2, Concrete Storm*. The film, for which a release date has yet to be set, is a sequel to the highly popular *L.A. Bounty* film which

Will Sophia Crawford play the Punisher? Stay tuned.

THEPUNISHER ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP. PHOTO: S-C-DACY.

BEHIND THE MASK

THE MASK ™ & © NEW LINE CINEMA

Dashing, dangerous, and computer-animated Jim Carrey gets a digital assist in *The Mask*.

Originally from Oakland, Calif., Tom Bertino is the Animation Supervisor extraordinaire on July's New Line feature *The Mask*. Coming to Industrial Light and Magic through ways of traditional animation, Tom has worked for such animation companies as Nelvana, DIC, and Hanna-Barbera. Making up his mind at age four to get into animation, Tom has worked on such films as *Terminator 2*, *The Abyss*, and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* before lending his talents to *The Mask*.

WIZARD: How exactly did you get started in this business? There isn't exactly a special effect/animation course in the average high school.

TOM BERTINO: I'm very much self-taught. In my very early childhood, I decided what I wanted to do with my life, and spent all the time in between then and the age of maturity studying and trying to learn. When I was in my late teens, I was lucky enough to cross paths with an independent animator who works in the area named Sally Cruikshank. She hired me as an art assistant and taught me a lot of the tricks of the trade. Since then, it has been just learn as you go. When I was in my early teens in the early 1970s, I had a little money and I actually bought myself one of the early dinosaur home video set-ups, a huge, clunky, reel-to-reel thing, just so I can tape cartoons and Ray Harryhausen movies and break them down frame by frame and learn how they did it.

WIZARD: How did you get involved with ILM?

TB: Interestingly enough, my baptism by fire was [the film] *Howard the Duck*! Depending on which side of the cult you're on, it's either a good thing or a bad thing. At that time, they had a long way to go and a short time to get there,

The Shadow ™ & © Universal City Studios Inc.

starred Sybil Danning and the late Steve James (best known to superhero fans as Cornel Parker from the pilot of *Mantis*). The series is adapted by Ron Fortier with art by Paul Pelletier (of DC's new *Outsiders* series).

TV

Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman has been officially picked up for a second season. Although the season finale looked grim, expect Lex Luthor (portrayed by John Shea) to return next season. The new owner of the Daily Planet, played by James Earl Jones, is also expected to return for another go-around. Filming will begin sometime this summer.

Tales from the Cryptkeeper has been officially picked up for next season by ABC for an undisclosed amount of episodes, while CBS has decided to pass on *Cadillacs and Dinosaurs*, based on the comic book *Xenozoic Tales* (for those of you without a dictionary, it's pronounced zen-a-zoe-ic). The USA channel will air reruns, and episodes will be released to video.

July 1 will see the release of Universal's *The Shadow* starring Alec Baldwin.

Lace Wood, a Canadian animation company, is producing a new Hardy Boys animated TV series. No news on which "lucky" network picked this one up.

SeaQuest DSV has also been picked up for next season. Despite shaky ratings, *SeaQuest* will return mainly because of an agreement between NBC and Producer Steven Spielberg that ensured the show's survival for at least two seasons.

Young Indiana Jones will return with four all-new two hour shows on the Family Channel to start airing in November. The channel is also negotiating with Paramount to obtain the rights to rerun the original episodes to the series, which aired on ABC from 1992-93.

THE MASK

and they were getting whatever local animation talent they could find that wasn't already occupied. I was just coming off of a job that allowed me to flow right in here. When I got here, I found out that there were a lot of folks here that I worked with before in various capacities in terms of Saturday morning animation. It was quite a group. In a way, it was like home. I just sort of fell right into it.

WIZARD: Out of all the movies that you have worked on, including *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, *The Abyss*, *Terminator 2*, and *Death Becomes Her*, if you could pick one movie for people to see your work that you would be the proudest of, what would it be?

TB: I'm working on it right now! [Laughs] It's up on my computer as we speak. This project, *The Mask*, has been quite a crazy project, but it's definitely been my happiest work experience in a very long time. It's a wedding of a lot of different things; it's taking the jump forward made in *Jurassic Park* as far as digital technology of creating a character; it's taking those skills and those tools in a different direction and in a very broad, humorous kind of style. I think I and the whole production [crew] have been turning out really good work. There's something inspirational about having these tools at hand to do something crazy with, and everybody who's working on the project has been rising to the occasion. I feel like, "Oh, I have the power to do this? Well, then let's really go crazy!" Plus the fact that as a computer animator, I'm only approaching having been in this two years. I started on *The Mask* last fall, and it was just as this project was ramping up [that]

We'll buy his heart popping out of his chest, but how does he get his shirt to stretch like that?

I was feeling a lot more confident with my own skills on the computer, which is a very alien medium to me after working with pencils and pens for some 15 years. The way I like to express it is I know enough about the technology now to go about corrupting it. I've been having a really fun time, and I'm really proud of my work on this picture, and everybody else has been. There is some definite eye popping that will be done.

WIZARD: How much reference material did you use? Was the comic book the sole material that you had, or did Dark Horse send you stuff?
TB: Basically, we used the comic books that people had as the jumping-off point, visually. Most of those were hanging around the art department; the art director has always enjoyed the comic even before it was a viable project here, so a lot of the design work as far as the effects on the characters has been clinging as close to the comic as we can.

WIZARD: Were you familiar with the comic at all?
TB: Oh, yes! I'm a big comic book fan. I was very excited when I heard that we were working on the project. It seemed like it would have a lot of possibilities to it for a lot of weird, wacky offbeat stuff. I've always loved the chance to work on a comic book project. *Howard the Duck*: I was very excited about it when I heard about it coming, although we won't go too much into the results there...

WIZARD: Getting back to the technology, is everything done on the computer, or are there still some things done with miniatures and trick camera work like in the old days?
TB: This project is virtually all digital. There are a few effects elements that have been shot on stage for inclusion; pyro elements, smoke, explosions, etc., that are being comped in digitally. But all of the animation, all of the modeling, all of the creature look is all 100% computer. That seems to be the way the industry is going. We certainly have the ability to do the other things if we need them, but that's what the clients want these days—the digital work—because they're very excited about it.

WIZARD: With effects like *Jurassic Park*, which were mostly computer generated, people are really excited about what can be done next. *Jurassic Park* was pushing the envelope yesterday; people want to know what will be pushing the envelope tomorrow.
TB: Exactly. Besides that, I will always have a first allegiance to the hand-drawn [work], I'm not a big technology lover, but I've come around to enjoying what the computer allows me to do, and the excitement of seeing these things come to life.

WIZARD: I'm interested to see what you guys can do with the new *Star Wars* films...
TB: You and me both!

WIZARD: I remember reading books on *Return of the Jedi*—which probably got more "Making of..." coverage than the previous films—about special effects, miniatures and models, etc. Nowadays, with these computers, you guys can do just about anything.
TB: The possibilities are exciting. It's having those tools in the toolbox that is one of the important considerations for George [Lucas] to be going ahead with these projects at this point. He's been sort of holding off doing them these last few years. His attitude is, "Now we can do something new," instead of it all being rehash.

WIZARD: I just happened to have caught *Star Wars* on the Sci-Fi Channel a while ago, and what is quite incredible is that the special effects, by today's standards, are very simplistic and even amateurish. Even if you compare the movie to *Jedi*, special effects-wise, *Jedi* blows it away.
TB: [The special effects have] been moving so fast. George sort of rebuilt the house, rebuilt the foundation—so to speak—with *Star Wars*. It was so amazing even then—it's still a good movie—but technically, you are quite right. The jump between those two [movies] makes *Star Wars* look kind of quaint.

It's actually kind of mind-boggling how fast things work. It's gotten to the point where barely a month will go by and I'll look at something and say, "Oh, we did it that way?" (laughs). Of course, I have the artist's curse, I have that sort of creative thing that once I've finished something and I've labored bringing this child into the world, I'll look at the finished product afterward and all I'll be able to say is, "Boy, if I had the chance to do that now..."

WIZARD: So what other projects do you have planned for the future, when you're finished with *The Mask*?
TB: Currently as we speak, we're working on Amblin's *Casper, the Friendly Ghost* film. That will probably be the next project I'll be going to do after *The Mask*. [Amblin has] sort of a unique problem in front of them, because their characters literally have to carry the film. Which is different than, say, *Jurassic Park* or *The Mask*, where you have effects sequences. Basically, all of the acting, all of the emoting of any kind, and not just the overly dramatic stuff, has to be carried by these computer graphic characters. That involves very subtle dialogue [work] and a lot of very tricky animation to sell these characters as being real characters, not just toys. They're getting very involved in motion capture technology, where you actually film an actor with electronic reference points on their body and their face, and then translate that into computer data so you can get a better guide as far as various points of the face: the cock of an eyebrow, etc. They're having some interesting results. ☆

Dave Galvan is a Portland, Ore. based freelance writer who specializes in the entertainment industry. Dave would like to thank Tom Bertino and Miles Perkins of Industrial Light and Magic as well as Alex Worman from New Line Cinema, all of whom helped with this interview.

B

Who is Blankman?

Find out in *Wizard* #37.

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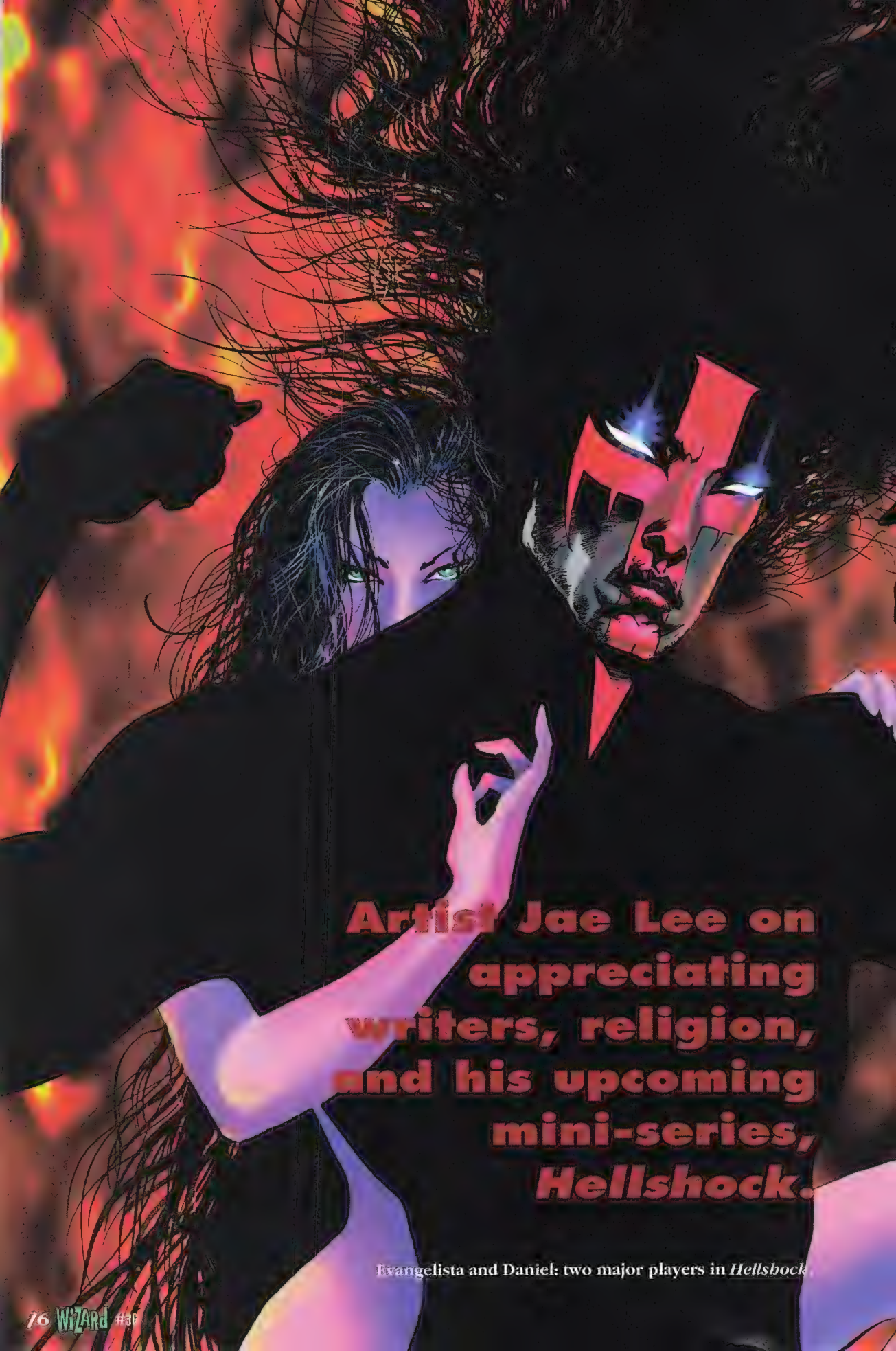


Artist Jae Lee on appreciating writers, religion, and his upcoming mini-series, *Hellshock*.

Evangelista and Daniel: two major players in *Hellshock*.

A Shock to the System

By Robert J. Sodaro

Jae Lee came to the United States from South Korea with his family in 1974. He attended the Art Institute of Atlanta in 1992 but left after four months. At the insistence of a friend, Lee attended a New York City comic convention and met writer Scott Lobdell, who encouraged him to pursue a career in comics.

Lee's breakthrough assignment was a Beast serial in 1991's *Marvel Comics Presents* #85-#92. Next, he penciled *Namor* for 13 issues and did three issues of *X-Factor*. Image co-founder Rob Liefeld then asked Lee to draw the Chapel story in the *Youngblood Strikefile* mini-series. In 1993, Lee was asked by Jim Lee to draw the three-issue *WildC.A.T.s Trilogy* mini-series. The artist returned briefly to Marvel in late '93 to draw three issues of *Spider-Man* and was slated to draw a monthly *Iron Fist* book but left the company for his current project: writing and drawing the creator-owned *Hellshock* for Image Comics. We spoke with Jae Lee, now 21, about his memories, plans, and opinions.

Do you feel a little intimidated by the limelight that's been shone on you these past couple of years because of where you've been and what you've done?

I haven't really noticed anything. I lead such a sheltered life. I don't know what other people think. I stay home and work. I don't have any contact with the outside world.

Well, if you were to read the fan press, you would see what they have to say.

I haven't really seen any critiques of my work. I haven't really read anything about it.

Photo: J. Schuyler

Artist/writer Jae Lee

Were you encouraged to do comics by your folks?

No, not at all. They wanted me to grow up to be an engineer and build something useful.

Have they finally seen the light?

A little bit. Of course, it didn't help that I dropped out of art college. They'd like me to go back to school and get a degree and all that stuff. I'd love to go back to school, because one thing I miss is being around people my own age and doing things people normally do in college.

What does it feel like to be directing your own destiny?

It's great. I was fortunate enough that I got into this really early. Worrying about what I'm going to do in 20 years, or when I'm done with college...I didn't have to go through that, luckily. I know a lot of people, friends my age, who are just getting out of school. They don't know what they want to do.

Did you always know you wanted to go into comics?

No, not at all. Of course, I read comics like everybody else when I was a kid. But doing it professionally, I never thought that was a possibility.

What convinced you that it could be a possibility?

When I went to New York City for a convention and I showed my samples around. It was a year before I actually broke in. I had just gotten out of high school. I was showing my stuff to editors, but none of them were interested. That's when I met Scott Lobdell [writer of *Uncanny X-Men*]. He liked my stuff. He gave me words of advice and the incentive to go on. He said, "Hey, this is possible."

It seems almost a given, as an artist, that if you draw one of the X-books, you become an overnight sensation. Do you think that's an accurate perception? Does everyone who touches an X-book become Image material?

Not necessarily. Look at Stephen Platt; he never touched the X-Men.

That's not to say that you have to touch an X-Men book to become popular.

You certainly don't. You've got the spotlight. You have one of the top-selling books. It couldn't hurt. I wish I'd spent more time with [*X-Factor*], but I knew it was only temporary,

All *Hellshock* artwork and characters ™ & © Jae Lee

Chapel ™ & © Rob Liefeld Inc.

since Joe Quesada was slated to take over the art...

On to your upcoming projects... Is *Hellshock* an ongoing series?

It's a four-issue limited series right now, with the possibility of a regular series.

Is this the first thing that you've written?

Yes. Actually, it's probably about the fifth thing I've written, since I've rewritten #1 so many times. I've had so many starts with this, this would be about my fifth full scripting redo of the project.

Have you contributed to plots on any of the other books that you've drawn?

Back when I was working on *Namor* with John Byrne, I contributed very, very basic plot ideas, like saying, "Hey, toss in Captain America"—and Byrne would put him in a cameo—or "Let's put Namor back into the water." To go as far as to say I co-plotted, no.

Given some of the perceived recent animosity between writers and artists these days, do you find that some writers are now more receptive to taking input from the artists?

I've been fortunate enough to work with writers who are pretty open to it. When I first started out, working with Scott Lobdell on *Marvel Comics Presents*, he was like my mentor. We are friends, basically. It's always great to work with a friend of yours, because you can bounce ideas off of each other and the working relationship is much nicer. So of course he was open to suggestions.

Not that I ever contributed to any story ideas. I could have. It was open to that. Even when I was working with John Byrne on *Namor*, there were several instances where he came out and said, "Any ideas you have, any guest stars you want or whatever, feel free."

Do you and Lobdell ever talk about collaborating again, this time on a creator-owned project?

We've always tossed that idea around, but he's busy with the X-Men and I'm busy with *Hellshock*. Maybe someday down the road.

Was the opportunity to contribute to plots the reason you went over to Image?

I saw it as an opportunity to create something: not just a character, but the environment in which the character exists. Of course, it has to blend in with Image continuity. Within that frame, you're just creating this little world. It's like doing a movie—with, of course, a lower budget and everything. All the story ideas and all the characters, all these are part of you. This is what you would do if you had these powers.

Was it a tough sell to get Image to let you start your own project, instead of helping one of the founders on their books?

No, because when I was first approached by Rob Liefeld a year and a half ago, I originally had the offer to do my own book, to create my own character. At the time I didn't think I was ready. I'd been working on *Namor*. I thought it would be best just to do one of [Image's existing] books. Rob offered me *Youngblood Strikefile*, and then *WildC.A.T.s Trilogy* came along. I did that with the understanding that I [would have] my own book when I was ready to do it.

Do you think all artists have a story to tell?

I don't know. There are plenty of artists I know that are just content with concentrating on one aspect of [comic production], whether it be inking or penciling. There are those who want to do their own

Chapel (top) from *Youngblood: Strikefile*, and Zealot from *WildC.A.T.s Trilogy*.

Zealot ™ & © Aegis Entertainment

thing instead of illustrating other people's stories.

Do you think writing is a tougher discipline to learn?

If you're an artist, you can certainly try to write. If you put down words, it's almost passable. It's kind of a shame that people perceive it that way. A good artist can do bad stories and no one [will] really care.

Part of the problem writers face is, since everybody uses words, they think that just by putting words down on paper, that's writing. There should be a different word to describe what writers do.

After writing my book, I've gained a whole new appreciation for writers in terms of what they must go through. Having a chance to do your own writing and your own thing is so much fun. That's what I've been missing for the past couple of years... I'm talking like I've been working for 10 years or something!

I read the background material about *Hellshock* you sent over (see sidebar). There seems to be a very religious slant.

There is, but that's not the main focal point of the story. This is the background and where the characters came from, but it's not about any particular religion.

I was wondering if you thought—given the high profile coverage comics have been getting in recent months—that this might provoke a negative reaction among some of the mainstream press.

You mean, people being offended by the content?

Yeah. People get offended by all types of things.

If you give it a chance and read it, I don't think you'll find anything offensive in it. There are things that certain characters do, but that's just the nature of the characters.

Are you religious?

I'm not religious at all. I've done research on various religions. I have this outside view of religion: [I] see people following their religions and a lot of the people thinking that their religion is the best.

Do you think that, in general, as long as we talk about religion it's fine, but as soon as you say something particular about the faith that I may have grown up with, I might get upset at that?

I think it's up to the individual. If you strongly believe in something—it doesn't have to be religion—if somebody goes against what you believe, obviously you will get a little upset. Of course, religion is subjective. Are you religious?

Actually, I'm Catholic. As a rule, that stuff doesn't bother me. It *does* bother me when people do things that are stupid.

This is not a book about religion. I don't see anything offensive in it. I'm trying to make it as realistic as possible. If a character says a prayer, it would be something a real Catholic would say. It's not just something made up. In that way, I think it would be offensive to make something up. These characters should be treated as characters and individuals. Just because a person is Catholic doesn't mean they don't do anything evil or commit sins. There are a lot of people out there who...just call themselves religious. They don't necessarily follow the words of the Bible...

So you're not going to be dealing much with demons and God?

It's not about heaven and hell. Those are backdrops. A book like *Spawn* deals with hell and heaven on a general basis. My book is about these six characters—five or six, give or take. It's about their lives and their background, blended in with religious and supernatural aspects. I'm not trying to say, "This is what heaven is. This is what hell is." I'm just trying to explore the world of these particular characters.

What type of book do you see this as being?

It has many different elements. Superhero elements are definitely in there. Horror is in there. The supernatural. Even a bizarre little romance. It's a mishmash of all the genres that I love, all the aspects of movies that I like. *Blade Runner*, *Star Wars*, *Terminator*—all of my influences are in there. I can't corner it as any one particular genre.

Just last summer, a bunch of artists and writers started projects at Image and got tossed out shortly thereafter. There was a lot of fanfare in the press about these guys, and apparently some had nasty things to say about Image. How secure do you feel? After you finish the first four books, do you think they'll let you have an ongoing series?

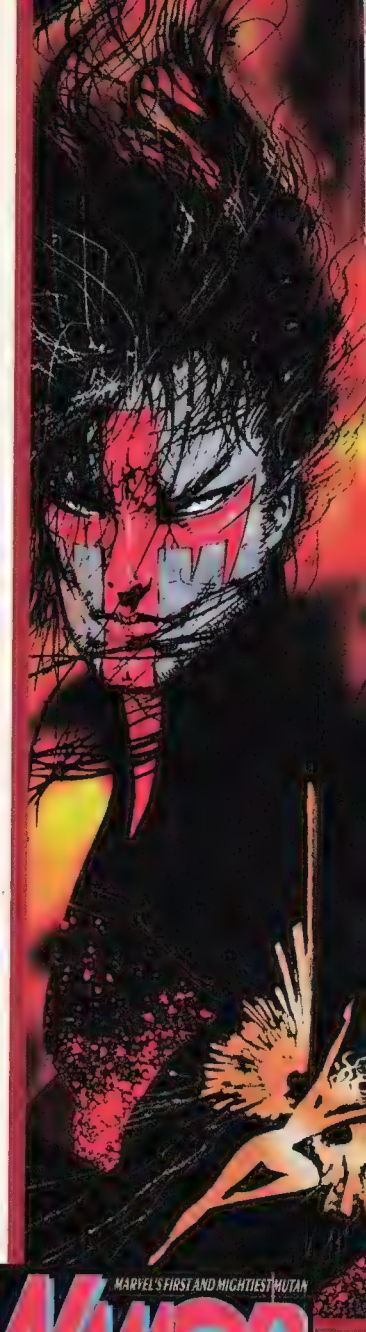
Sales will dictate that. Up until this point, it's been whether I've been on time with it, and whether the stuff has principles. You don't want to have excessive violence, nudity, that kind of stuff.

Excuse me, but it seems that Image took the path of excessive violence a while back. Is the company changing what it wants to do in its comics?

Mike Grell [in his book *Shaman's Tears*] had breasts all over the place. You don't want to do that. It's hypocritical if a guy is getting his head chopped off or heart pulled out and you're looking at it but [people] don't look twice. If you have a little nipple, they say, "Oh my God, look what they did."

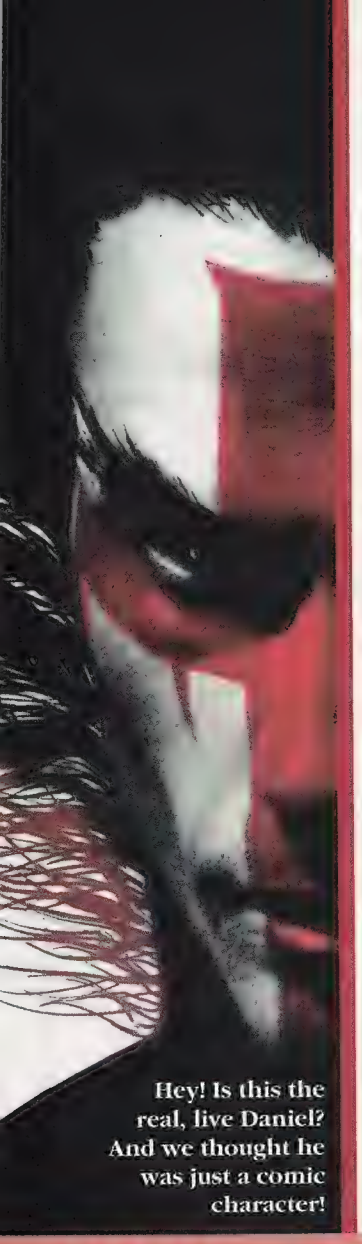
If you're a 14-year-old kid and you tell your parents you're going to see an R-rated movie, and they say, "Well, is it R-rated for sex, like *Basic Instinct*?" "No, it's *Terminator*." "Oh, OK." *Terminator* is an R-rated movie, but how many kids have seen that?

I felt, when I was 12 or 13, nobody should tell me what not to watch. I thought that I thought like an adult. All these kids, when they watch this stuff, they think they're adults and they think they can handle it. I don't necessarily think that kids should be told what not to do. Maybe I'm just saying that because I'm not a parent.



Namor and Iron Fist ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Is Daniel (above) being tickled by Tinkerbell? Namor and Iron Fist (at right) don't look at all amused.



Hey! Is this the real, live Daniel? And we thought he was just a comic character!

There's a lot of talk that the violence and the adult nature in today's comics calls for censorship and ratings. Are comics today too adult-oriented for kids?

Who is to judge how kids draw that line? How do you draw that line saying kids can't handle this? There is nothing different that I watch now [from] when I was 12 or 13. My understanding of it is different, but I watch all the same things.

You don't think someone's going to read a violent comic book or see a violent movie and then go out and commit a violent crime—that they're going to say, "Oh wow! Maybe I can drop a safe on somebody's head"?

If you're that susceptible—to go out and kill somebody after watching a movie—you're bound to crack up later in life. Imagine what having a nine-to-five job would do to somebody like that...

Do you think you're getting credibility because of who you are, what you're doing, and that you're working for Image? *Hellshock* is the hot new upcoming Image book.

Well, it's definitely good to have a high profile book from Image. Whether it *is* high profile, we'll have to see. The Image logo will certainly help in terms of people looking just to see what the new Image book is.

Is this the only thing you're doing? Are you going to be doing anything for any of the other Image studios?

No, this is it. It'll be out monthly from July through October.

How is it coming along?

Great. The first three issues are done right now. There is no way it's going to be late.

I know there's a standard policy at Image now that you've gotta have three issues in the can before you can start soliciting.

Right, just to guard against late books. So if the book is late, I'll personally go to the stores and pick up all their returnable copies. Of course, [with] all the time it will take to pick up all those comics, I'll be another month behind. Then I'll have to make the same rounds next month. It sort of defeats the purpose.

What do you plan to do once you've finished *Hellshock*?

I want to start the regular series.

Do you think you can maintain it as a monthly book?

If I have a head start, yeah. The hardest part of this was getting the story going. What I had to do with this book is try to get inside the minds of all the characters and get to know them well enough so that they could pretty much write their own stories.

What does *Hellshock* have to do, in your mind, to succeed as a book?

People have to really enjoy the storyline and be eager to read the next issue to see what happens to the characters.

How important are sales to you?

Sales are important, but it's also important that the people who read this book enjoy it. I'd rather have people enjoy it than buy it and put it away. I would want their reaction to [be to] the book and not [to] how well it adds to their collection.

I read somewhere that you'd become disillusioned with comics as an industry. Have you changed your tune with *Hellshock*?

I felt disenchanted because I'd seen how things work from the inside [of the industry], and it seemed like there's been a lot of bad product coming out lately. But working on *Hellshock* has helped me in a professional sense. Before I started it, I was feeling burned out and I didn't know what to do next. *Hellshock* has put things in fresher perspective for me. I feel like I'm starting all over again. ☆

Robert J. Sodaro is a freelance writer based in Connecticut. He recently determined that if only the good die young, then either he isn't as good or he isn't as young as he thought.

HELL BOY

A synopsis of Joe Lee's new series, *Hellshock*.

Constance was just 14 years old when it all began. One night, she dreamed that a heavenly angel came to her. When she awoke from her slumber, she understood that something beautiful was growing inside her. She had been impregnated by an otherworldly force.

When her very religious parents discovered this, they kicked her out of the house. Constance took refuge in a Roman Catholic convent. The mother superior there thought the "immaculate conception" to be a fabrication woven by the girl to cover her own sinfulness, but let it pass. Naturally, after a time, even Constance began to doubt the child's divine nature.

The child was born in 1972. Due to complications, Constance slipped into a coma. When she revived, she asked to see her newborn son, whom she had named Daniel. The nuns told Constance that the child had been possessed, and that it had to be exorcised and killed. Constance, horrified, prayed to be forgiven for having brought such a creature into the world and eventually became a nun. However, she never completely forgave herself, and ultimately suffered a nervous breakdown. She left the convent at the age of 35.

Constance never knew that when Daniel was born, the nuns had sequestered the child away from her, feeling she had suffered enough during the traumatic birth. The baby seemed very unusual: he never cried, his eyes seemed to glow, and one nun even thought that she had seen a bloody cross form on the baby's face.

Mother Superior began to give credence to Daniel's preternatural conception. She had a priest perform an exorcism on the child. After lying to Constance about the child's untimely demise, Mother Superior placed him in an orphanage run by the priest. Under the priest's care, Daniel grew to adolescence.

His childhood was less than idyllic. Due to his unusual heritage, the boy was privy to things that no man was ever intended to see or know. His visions of an ethereal world conflicted with the here and now of the mortal plane. These visions, brought on by his dual nature, began to obsess Daniel. Upon reaching puberty, the human half of his mind collapsed under the strain. Guided solely by animalistic instincts, he ran away, losing himself in the growing cesspool that is New York City.

Enter Officer Haight, a corrupt 47-year-old cop. Haight is a first-class screw-up who has been drunk most of his miserable life. Faced with an imminent forced retirement, he is looking to salvage what's left of his life. In many respects, he is like Daniel, totally lost and looking for a way back to life.

Currently, Haight is working on a horrific case dubbed "the Bloody Mary Killings," because all the victims have been nuns and priests. Haight needs to solve this case before he retires. Thus far, there have been six killings, but no solid clue to the killer's identity or motivation. Then Daniel happens to wind up in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Into this highly volatile mix of explosive individuals arrives Evangelista and a mysterious entity named Christianson. Evangelista, a stunningly beautiful Japanese woman, attempts to rescue Daniel from his current state of existence. Christianson's role will be revealed during the series.

—Robert J. Sodaro

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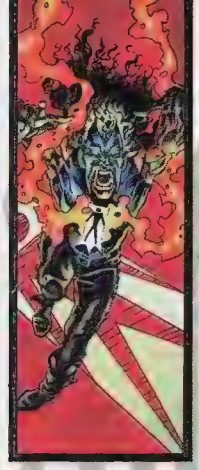


Order from Chaos

Valiant's summer "mega-adventure," "The Chaos Effect," promises to present a Valiant Universe never seen before.

By Jack Curtin

Where once there was Unity, now there is Chaos.

Valiant Comics will unleash "The Chaos Effect" on its unsuspecting universe this summer. This "mega-adventure"—Valiant doesn't want anybody calling this a "crossover," for reasons explained in the sidebar—will devastate the world and dramatically affect the lives and powers of several Valiant characters. The storyline will also launch three new titles, two immediately after the story's conclusion and the other later this year, and serves as the death knell for another.

"The Chaos Effect" begins with *The Chaos Effect* Alpha, a free 16-page comic which sets up the forthcoming storyline. The adventure then weaves its way through 17 titles over a five-week period from mid-June to late July. For each of four weeks, four Valiant titles will chronicle one of four independent story arcs: Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon. Finally, in the last week, *The Chaos Effect* Omega wraps up the story and marks a major turning point for characters present and future.

As the saying goes, some will live, some will die, and some will be changed forever.

The story opens with Ivar the Timewalker running for his life; before it's over, the entire world will be in a similar predicament. Ivar, who has always been the least disruptive—and least visible—of Valiant's three immortal brothers, finally gets his moment on center stage by precipitating the possible end of the world—not the best career move, all in all.

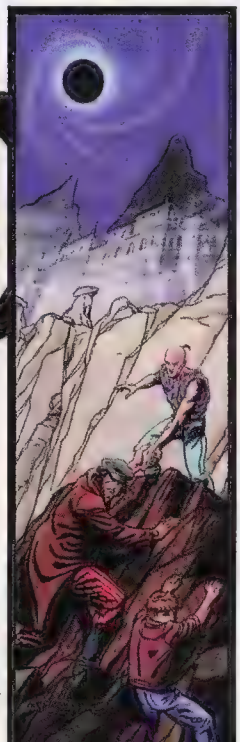
It seems that Ivar is the only survivor of a terrible battle waged at some indeterminate point in time. When he escapes through one of his time portals to the present day, untold amounts of necromantic "Darque" energy follow him through and are unleashed upon the planet, with devastating results.

The plot for "The Chaos Effect" came from Valiant Editor-in-Chief Bob Layton and was fleshed out by the entire creative team, Executive Editor Tony Bedard says. "We originally got everybody together and started thinking of a way to follow up on 'Unity,'" Valiant's big 1992 summer crossover. Plans were to bring back its villain, Erica Pierce, aka Mothergod, "but it really wasn't working," Bedard says.

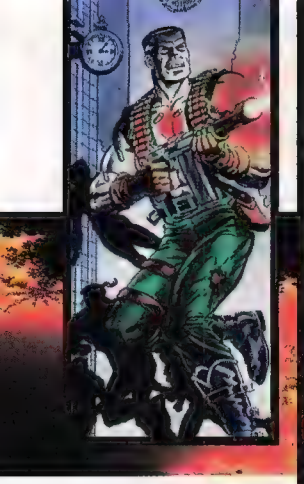
The next proposal centered around the Master Darque from the *Solar* #0 "universe" surviving the aftermath of that story and coming to the Valiant Universe's future. He discovers that he was defeated by Shadowman in 1999, as *Rai* #0 related, and then tries to alter history so that he wins in the end.

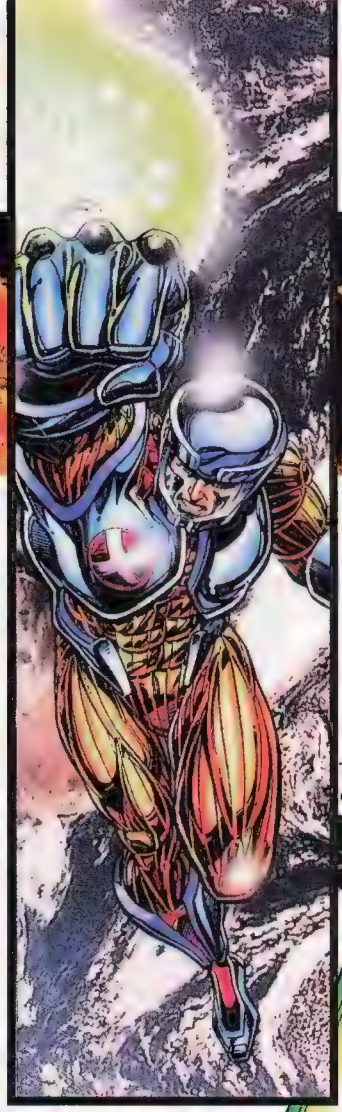
"Nobody could get very excited about that one, either," Bedard admits. "Then, when Bob offered this plot for discussion, everything clicked. This gave us just what we wanted: a worldwide event with vast repercussions, repercussions which will be felt in the Valiant Universe long after 'The Chaos Effect' is over, and which affect the lives of all our characters in different ways."

As the plot developed, Bedard says, difficult publishing decisions were made. "*Secret Weapons* has been selling reasonably well for us, but we didn't feel it was reaching the level of quality we wanted... It didn't have a strong enough hook. So



Clockwise from upper left: Shadowman, the H.A.R.D. Corps, Archer, Armstrong, Geoff, Rai, and Torque can't avoid "The Chaos Effect."





Top, from left to right: Bloodshot, X-O, the Geomancer, and the Eternal Warrior will also be caught in the "Chaos." Shadowman and Master Darque (below) figure to square off!

we completely redesigned the concept of that book in #11, did the totally unexpected in #12, and now will be throwing the new team smack into the middle of the greatest disaster the world has ever seen. I think our readers are going to like it a lot.

"*Archer & Armstrong* is another book that just hasn't been working in recent months, in our opinion, so we will be canceling that title with #26, which is a 'Chaos Effect' issue. That opens a slot for us to launch a new *Geomancer* title in late July. And we add *Timewalker* in August as another direct follow-up to the ['Chaos Effect'] series."

Bedard reports that Valiant's new Geomancer is "a really interesting character, with a look to him that is completely different from any other hero I've seen in comics," and that the Eternal Warrior is going to be less than thrilled with him, even though Gilad, using *The Book of Geomancers*, was responsible for finding him. These events are recounted in *Eternal Warrior* #27, John Ostrander's debut as writer of that title, and *Geomancer* #1, which stars the new "grunge look" Geomancer.

"We wanted to have a Geomancer that was different than before, one that didn't need a protector like the Eternal Warrior and could fight for himself," Bedard says. "When Gilad discovers the Earth chose this pretty crooked guy to be the next Geomancer, he kinda rolls his eyes, and the two have a falling out right away."

A third new title will complete Valiant's 18-title lineup later this year: *The Visitor*. *The Chaos Effect* Alpha will be highlighted by the first announced appearance of this mysterious new character. "Announced" is the operative word for this event in all of Valiant's promotional literature about the Visitor, sug-

Turok, Solar, and Magnus ™ & © Western Publishing Co. Inc. All artwork and other characters ™ & © Voyager Communications Inc.

gesting that he's not entirely new to the scene. There are rumors that the Visitor is actually Sting, formerly of *Harbinger*, but no one at Valiant will reveal his identity.

"The Visitor is being kept a big secret," Bedard says. "He's going to be a real superhero kind of guy in a way that has never been seen in the Valiant Universe before. Who and what he really is will be revealed in the course of his own title. I think it's fair to say, though, that he will be, in many ways, the most powerful [Valiant] hero of all."

The existing characters who will undergo significant changes during "The Chaos Effect" include Geoff the Geomancer (the company hints that we'll see the "ultimate" change for this star-crossed kid but is keeping things mysterious), Shadowman (who will receive new powers), Dr. Mirage (his greatest frustration will end, but will his wife be pleased about that?), and Magnus (Valiant keeps pointing out that the old Robot Fighter is "expendable" now that his son, Torque, has become the lead character in *Magnus, Robot Fighter*).

Here's a rundown on what readers can expect to see in "The Chaos Effect," garnered from Valiant promotional efforts and an interview with Bedard.

The Chaos Effect Alpha: When Ivar leaps to the present-day Temple at Ladakh in Tibet to save his life, his time portal does not close behind him as usual: a great wave of necromantic power follows the Timewalker through it. This huge surge of power has an effect similar to the electromagnetic pulse generated by a nuclear explosion, literally freezing all electrical and electronic equipment across the globe and unleashing worldwide catastrophe. Computers cease functioning, planes plunge from the sky, cities black out. All the beings who gain their powers from necromantic energy are suddenly elevated to near godhood by the influx. "And then Ivar meets the Visitor, who

tells him this is the beginning of the end of everything," Bedard chuckles.

This free issue features a cover by Dan Jurgens and Jerry Ordway, a story by Layton, and art by Bernard Chang and Ordway. "We are really excited to have Dan and Jerry joining us on this project," says Bedard. "Both of them approach comics with the same aesthetic and attitude toward storytelling that we do. It's been a personal treat for me to see Jerry, who's expressed admiration for Bernard's work on *The Second Life of Doctor Mirage* in the past, inking Bernard on the two *Chaos Effect* bookend comics."

"The Chaos Effect" Beta (*Shadowman* #29, *The Second Life of Doctor Mirage* #11, *Turok, Dinosaur Hunter* #16, *Secrets of the Valiant Universe* #2): This arc, which groups Valiant's mystical and mystical-related characters, is one of the two key arcs in the storyline. "Shadowman has always been a character somewhat at the mercy of outside forces up to this point," says Bedard. "He's never really gotten a full handle on his powers, never gotten them completely under his control. Now we will see what he could ultimately become with his power in full bloom—and it's kind of frightening.

"Master Darque, on the other hand, has come to like being the world's most powerful necromancer, and he and Shadowman engage in a real knock-down battle as they both come to understand they are so powerful that they can just go at it no holds barred. Sandria Darque has some newfound power as well, and she has to decide how she will use it and with whom she will side.

"Dr. Mirage and Carmen, on the other hand, head for Ladakh, where the time portal remains open, spewing out this destructive energy, to see what they can do about it. Remember, though, that necromantic energy is what's been keeping Mirage alive. So what happens when he receives this new surge of that energy? And what will happen if he is successful in cutting it off?"

Turok has no mystical powers of his own, of course, but he is in tune with the Earth and nature. "Sandria goes to warn him of the appearance of an evil shaman who now has necromantic powers, establishing a new enemy for him to fight," Bedard explains. Meanwhile,

Clockwise from top: Turok, the Eternal Warrior, Magnus, and Dr. Mirage and Carmen. They all boogey down in "The Chaos Effect"—will they all emerge unscathed?

the intelligence-boosting electronic brain implants in Mon-Ark's dinosaurs have short-circuited, and the dinosaurs have reverted to normal velociraptors. As for Mon-Ark himself, his fate, seen at the conclusion of May's *Turok Yearbook* #1, will keep him out of commission—and "The Chaos Effect"—for a while.

Secrets of the Valiant Universe is an ongoing irregular title; the first issue appeared with

Wizard's Beginning of the Valiant Era special edition in April. The second issue concentrates on Master Darque, who begins to think that this extraordinary disaster may lead him to aid his enemies in order to save himself. Also in this issue, Darque fights the insane Dr. Eclipse, and one will be destroyed. Which one? "Darque will play an important role in resolving 'The Chaos Effect,'" Bedard admits, but he won't reveal the victor of that particular battle. He will say that "death" does not apply to those two characters in ordinary ways.

"The Chaos Effect" Gamma (*Bloodshot* #20, *Secret Weapons* #13, *Ninjak* #8, *Archer & Armstrong* #26/*Eternal Warrior* #26): Valiant's action-adventure titles contain a loosely connected story arc that shows the impact of "The Chaos Effect" in England and sets up the final fate of Geoff the Geomancer. Bloodshot is confronted by the Immortal Enemy and a new villain.

The new Secret Weapons team, still unsettled by the tragic and unexpected loss of Para-Man during its first outing, will face the devastation of the necromantic wave in a story relating to Bloodshot's adventure. In recent months, Valiant has been remarkably closed-mouthed about its plans for the *Secret Weapons* title, reportedly because the company wanted to preserve the secrets behind the team until its debut in the brown-paper-enveloped issue #11.

Ninjak finds himself battling Madame Noire, whose ability to charm men has been raised to quantum levels by the necromantic surge. Meanwhile, Archer, Armstrong, and Geoff make their way to Ladakh, where an injured Timewalker tells them of the Visitor's dire message. The Eternal Warrior remains trapped in London, battling a necromancer from the Dark Ages, and is unable to answer Geoff's desperate distress call. Although it's not listed as one of the two "must-read" story arcs, the rumors about Geoff's fate suggest that those who miss Gamma will miss the full impact of "The Chaos Effect." (Bedard says that the events in *Rai* #0, set after the "mega-adventure" and featuring Geoff, will remain inviolate.)

"The Chaos Effect" Delta (*Harbinger* #34, *Armorines* #5, *X-O Manowar* #33, *H.A.R.D. Corps* #23): This tightly plotted story arc concerns a battle in the high-tech corner of the Valiant Universe that is only peripherally involved with the main event but which will resolve the Spider Aliens menace for the foreseeable future.

"Our approach has been to try and limit the number of fantastic elements in our universe, to keep it more believable and accessible," Bedard explains, "but one result of that is that these elements are then utilized perhaps a little more frequently than they should be. The Spider Aliens have really been useful to our creators in terms of spinning out new characters and new storylines, but I think readers may be getting a little weary of them. So what we have done is bring about a spectacular resolution with a major battle in space."

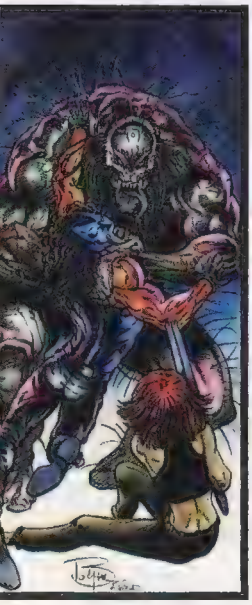
It's a good thing that the battle is in space, since it's largely waged by the Armorines, H.A.R.D. Corps, and X-O, none of whom would be able to function effectively within the grasp of the Earth's electrical blackout. They all conveniently lifted off before "The Chaos Effect" struck: Toyo Harada enlisted the aid of Aric and his X-O armor against the aliens, the Armorines were sent into the fray by the National Security Council, and the H.A.R.D. Corps geared up for the battle as well. Once the blackout occurs, Harada enters an isolation chamber and tries to reach out with his mind farther than he has ever attempted before, establishing himself as a sort of psionic communications link among the Earth's forces. Throughout all of this, Harada will form an alliance with his enemies, the H.A.R.D. Corps.

Meanwhile, back on Earth, the Harbinger team witnesses the results of the necromantic power surge during a cross country trip: they battle Dr. Eclipse, whose powers have been raised to godlike levels. But does this mean that Dr. Eclipse won the aforementioned fight with

Clockwise from above: X-O ventilates a bionosaur, the Harbinger kids be-bop with Dr. Eclipse, and Solar's caught between Ravenus and Eclipse.

Master Darque? No, Bedard says, because this story doesn't necessarily take place after *Secrets of the Valiant Universe* #2.

"The Chaos Effect" Epsilon (*Solar, Man of the Atom* #38, *Psi-Lords* #3, *Rai* #26, *Magnus, Robot Fighter* #41): Valiant's four science fiction titles feature the second story arc that must be read in order to fully appreciate "The Chaos Effect." When Phil Seleski (Solar) awakens in 1994 to find himself literally dissipating, he sends a call for help throughout time and space—a call that reaches Solar the Destroyer, the physical embodiment of Seleski's more destructive persona, in 4020.



Determined to save his other half regardless of the cost, the Destroyer heads back to Earth, smashing through the Psi-Lords, Magnus, and Rai on his way to Ladakh. A massive battle ensues, in the midst of which Takashi, the villainous son of the original Rai, makes his own bid for power. "He does something really sick and shocking," says Bedard. "I think it is one of the more unsettling things we've yet seen in comics." In the end, Bedard says ominously, "Magnus is called upon to make a major sacrifice in order to try and save present-day Earth."

The Chaos Effect Omega: This is the second bookend issue in the "Chaos Effect" storyline. Chaos, it turns out, is no more absolute than time; the unnatural disaster is finally brought to an end in this issue, although its effects will be felt throughout the Valiant Universe for months to come. "We will be trying to deal with this global catastrophe in a realistic way," says Bedard. "We will see the aftereffects of a major event like this in several different titles." In many ways, he says, "The Chaos Effect" is "worse" than "Unity" because it happens in the real world—everyone on Earth experiences it. The consequences for Geoff, Magnus, Archer, Armstrong, and Dr. Mirage will become clear before this climactic battle concludes.

"The really cool thing about 'The Chaos Effect,'" sums up Bedard, "is that not only is it a good story—one that readers will enjoy and remember—but we come out of it with several major changes and alterations in the Valiant Universe, and even get to tie up some loose ends from 'Unity.' When the dust settles, the new Geomancer is very different from anyone who has held that role before, and because of that, the Eternal Warrior is free, after 5,000 years, to pursue his own destiny, which will give us a whole different take on that character. Ivar will have become a major player, with his own title. Shadowman has a better grasp of his powers, the Visitor has been officially introduced into the Valiant Universe, and Dr. Mirage is, well, more substantial," he laughs.

White Shadowman (left) has his own problems, the Armorines and X-O (above) are off to squash Spider Aliens.

Valiant is supporting "The Chaos Effect" with header cards, counter dumps, flyers, and checklist cards for readers, to be included in both distributor catalogs and *Chaos Effect* Alpha. Says Bedard, "We have every confidence that this effort is going to please all our existing fans and create a lot of new ones." ☆

Jack Curtin is a Philadelphia-based freelance writer. He has a lifelong commitment to chaos—just look at his desk.

WHEN IS A CROSSOVER NOT A CROSSOVER?

Why, when it's a mega-adventure, of course!

The folks at Valiant would like to make one thing perfectly clear: "The Chaos Effect" is not a "crossover."

It is an "interactive event." A "mega-adventure," if you will. But it is most definitely not a "crossover." Got it? Good.

Here's the scoop:

"The Chaos Effect" is presented in 18 comics: two bookends plus a series of four weekly four-issue story arcs. It's really necessary to read only the bookends and the first and last story arcs, Beta and Epsilon, to get the full story; the other two four-issue arcs are standalone (albeit related) stories about how various characters deal with the cataclysmic events set in motion in "The Chaos Effect."

Valiant even reworked its shipping schedule to group the books into loosely arranged categories: mystical, action-adventure, high tech, and science fiction.

"Since no one's the worse off if they don't read the main story," Valiant says, "this is clearly not a crossover. Simple as that.

There's more.

"When we had a writers meeting a few months back to try and come up with a big story event for the summer," Executive Editor Tony Bedard says, "we wanted to be sure that we developed something that everyone felt good about and was comfortable with. We didn't want this to be just another marketing exercise, [illegible] behind it. Crossovers have gotten a pretty bad name among a lot of fans in recent times, and after our experience with *Unity ultimate*," Valiant's joint crossover with Image Comics last summer, half of which shipped late, "well, we wanted to be sure that we did this right, and that people understood that we were doing something of value here. [Editor-in-Chief] Bob Layton came up with the term 'mega-adventure,' and that seems to say it just right."

"This is definitely not a marketing ploy," stresses Vice President of Marketing Marty Stever. "The key element in the marketing of any comic is that you must start out with a good story. I think we've got that covered. This is a tight, well-written story that is a lot of fun. A lot of times when people hear there are going to be several different books involved in a storyline, they immediately figure it's some sort of scam. We want our readers to feel that we are being very aboveboard here."

It's been a long and winding road since 1992's "Unity," the major, company-wide crossover that occurred at the peak of Valiant's meteoric rise in the comics market. The tightly interwoven storylines and relationships developed under founding editor Jim Shooter attracted both readers and speculators—the latter a short-term benefit, admittedly, but a benefit nonetheless to a young company trying to gain a safe foothold—and made "Unity" one of the hot projects of '92. Shooter's unfriendly departure shortly thereafter began a perceived period of creative stagnation for the company, along with rumors of financial difficulties and slipping sales after the speculators bailed out of the comic market en masse last summer.

Valiant spokespeople say that "The Chaos Effect" and the consequent changes to the Valiant line will help rectify concerns they share with their readers about quality lapses in a few titles, but that overall, the line is as solid editorially as it ever was. The company responds to financial questions by noting that every publisher has experienced severe sales drops since last summer, and that even so, Valiant's market share has significantly improved since 1992. The "Comic Market Share Report" in May's *Diamond Dialogue*, a monthly magazine for retailers published by Diamond Distributors Inc., shows Valiant in fourth place, up slightly to about 6.5 percent of the market in dollars and 5.5 percent in unit sales, substantiating that claim. The company had approximately 4.0 percent of the market in 1992.

But Valiant's future apparently took a drastic and sudden turn for the better last spring, when Acclaim Entertainment Inc., a leading manufacturer of interactive entertainment products, announced an agreement in principle to acquire Valiant's parent company, Voyager Communications Inc., for $65 million. If the deal goes through, Acclaim could open some doors for its acquisition. This possibility alone suggests that Valiant will remain one of the more intriguing and successful publishers around.

—Jack Curtin

THE COUNTDOWN'S BEGUN

ZERO HOUR

The man who killed Superman® will be appearing on the comic book show to end all comic book shows. Dan Jurgens guest hosts a comic book extravaganza on QVC® showcasing this writer/artist extraordinaire and many autographed, limited-edition comic books. Highlights include Superman® merchandise and Zero Hour: Crisis In Time™ comic books signed by Dan Jurgens. Check your local cable listings. All times EDT.

Monday, July 25th
7-9 p.m.

QVC®

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CONTEST

Chaos Effect Clean-Up!

Those zany folks over at Valiant, best known for their tight continuity and highly ordered universe, are plunging their cosmos into chaos, and while their heroes are busy dealing with the crisis, there's bound to be plenty of looting. With that in mind, Valiant and Wizard Press have teamed up to make sure everyone gets a fair shake at winning some of that loot. Here's what you can steal away with:

Grand Prize (One winner)
A framed original page of Bob Layton art from "The Chaos Effect" mega-adventure!

Second Prize (20 winners)
A *Chaos Effect* bound edition signed by Bob Layton!

Third Prize (25 winners)
An *X-O Manowar* #28 (the death of Shanhara) signed by writer Jorge González!

Fourth Prize (25 winners)
A *Secret Weapons* #11 (the debut of the new Secret Weapons team) signed by writer Maurice Fontenot!

Fifth Prize (25 winners)
An *Armorines* #1 signed by writer Jorge González and artist Jim Calafiore!

THAT'S WHAT YOU CAN WIN, AND HERE'S HOW YOU CAN WIN IT. ANSWER THE FIVE "CHAOS EFFECT" TRIVIA QUESTIONS BELOW, TAKE THE DARKENED LETTERS, SHUFFLE 'EM AROUND A BIT, AND TRY TO DECIPHER THE CHAOS CODE. (C'MON, THIS IS PRETTY SIMPLE. WE USED TO RUN THIS TYPE OF CONTEST ALL THE TIME.)

1. Where are Archer and Armstrong stranded after "The Chaos Effect"?

2. Who took Solar the Destroyer's breastplate from the future to present-day Ladakh at the end of "The Chaos Effect"?

3. Who brought Archer, Armstrong, Geoff, Dr. Mirage, and Carmen to Ladakh?

4. Which member of the H.A.R.D. Corps is possessed by Toyo Harada?

5. Where were the Psi-Lords on their way to when their communications jammed?

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ONCE YOU'VE FIGURED OUT THE ANSWERS TO ALL THE "CHAOS EFFECT" TRIVIA QUESTIONS AND DECIPHERED THE CHAOS CODE, FILL OUT THE CHAOS EFFECT ENTRY FORM BELOW, STUFF IT IN A STAMPED ENVELOPE, AND MAIL IT TO:

Chaos Effect Contest
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

Better start shufflin'—this has gotta get to Wizard Press by August 8, 1994!

The Fine Print

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press and Voyager Communications, their immediate families, and that jerk Ivar. Watch where you're going, ya wingnut. This Chaos Effect thing is all his fault. Print your name, age, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the Chaos Code on the official entry form, a three-by-five-inch index card, or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry to Chaos Effect Contest, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become the property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the name of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. Hmmm, I wonder if Jim Shooter's gonna enter. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by August 8, 1994.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winners will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on August 9, 1994, by Wizard Press.

For a list of winners, available after August 31, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Chaos Effect Winners, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just keep reading *Wizard*!

CONTEST

Chaos Effect Entry Form

I am:

NAME (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) AGE

HOME ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

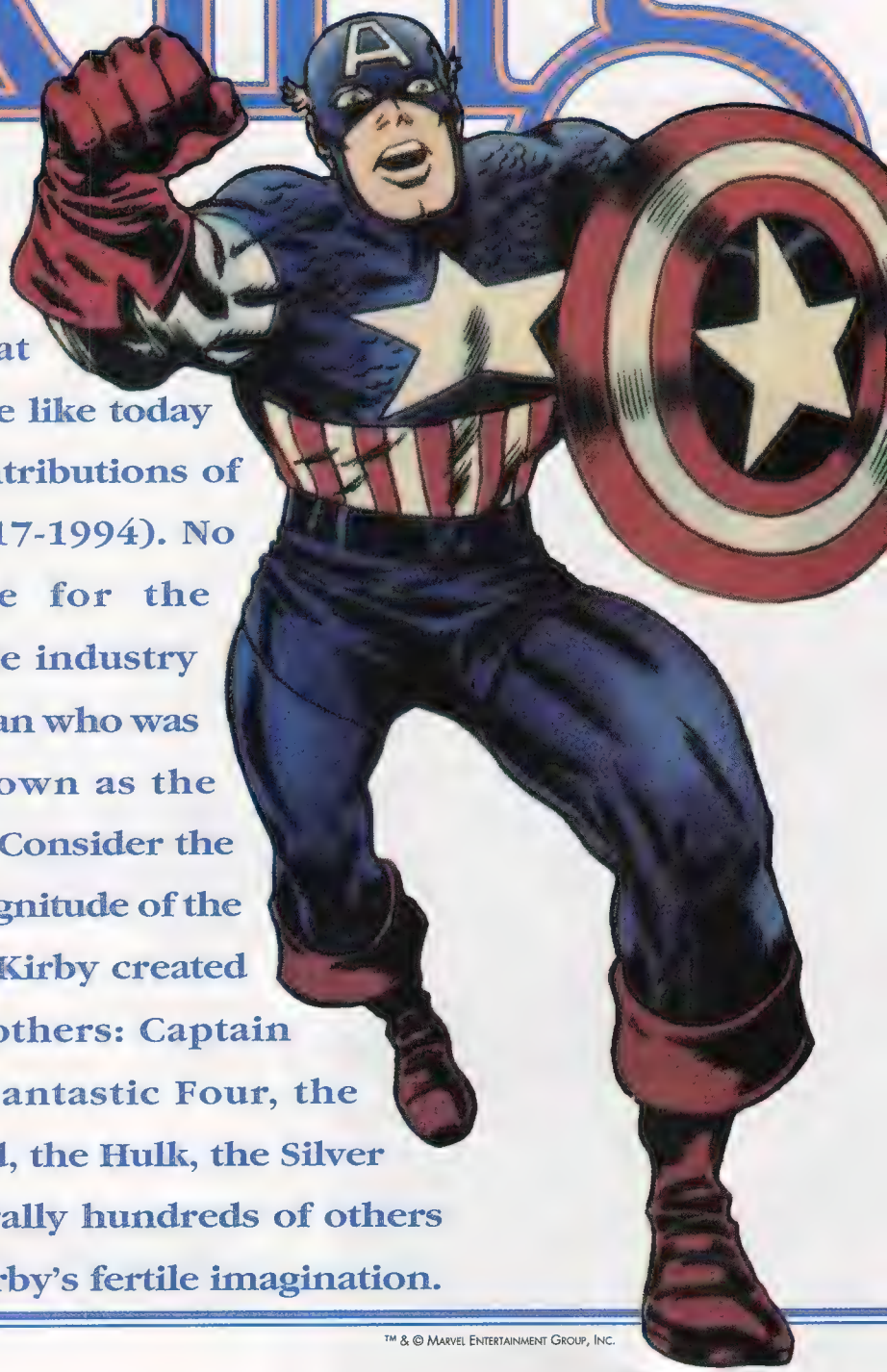
PHONE (DON'T FORGET YOUR AREA CODE)

Chaos Code:

The King

A look at the life and career of Jack "King" Kirby.

By William A. Christensen and Mark Seifert



It's hard to imagine what comics would be like today without the contributions of Jack Kirby (1917-1994). No one did more for the medium and the industry itself than the man who was deservedly known as the king of comics. Consider the number and magnitude of the characters that Kirby created alone or with others: Captain America, the Fantastic Four, the X-Men, Darkseid, the Hulk, the Silver Surfer, and literally hundreds of others sprung from Kirby's fertile imagination.

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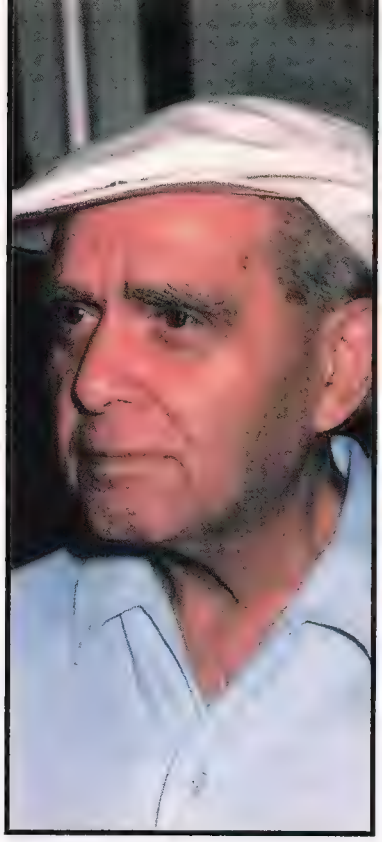

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

But these characters are just part of his influence on the comics medium. Kirby's contribution to the art of comic storytelling itself cannot be ignored. His narrative ability imbued his work with an almost cinematic quality. Early in his career, Kirby popularized the full-page and double-page spreads that are so common in comics today. But it is probably his dynamic drawing style itself that has had the most profound impact on comic art. The sheer power of Kirby's drawings has inspired many, if not most, comic artists since. Without any doubt, Jack Kirby is the single most important creator in the history of American comic books.

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Kirby drew this cover for* Champion Comics *#8 in 1940.

The Formative Years

Kirby was born Jacob Kurtzberg on August 28, 1917, in New York City. He developed a taste for adventure at an early age, in part because of his frenetic surroundings. "I was a very active kid and it was an active environment," Kirby recalled in an interview conducted shortly before his death in February. "It was on the lower east side of New York, and what I mean by active is that anything could happen. There was usually a fight—some guy would come up from the next block and you would fight. If you knocked him out, you and the guys would lay him out near his mother's door and vice versa. There were a lot of street fights, but we never used weapons of any kind, just our fists."

Young Jacob's thirst for adventure soon translated into a love of science fiction and motion pictures. "I loved science fiction in general, and I still enjoy it to this day," Kirby remembered. "I have always been a filmgoer, and I would see a picture maybe two or three times. My mother used to have to come to the theater and take me out. They made very, very good movies at that time, and I enjoyed them all."

His drawing skills and imagination were also evident early on. As a young boy, he began to study how-to-draw books he found at the library. He was to attend the Pratt Institute in New York City for formal training, but those plans fell prey to the Great Depression when his father lost his job and the family could no longer afford the tuition.

POPEYE ™ & © MAX FLEISCHER STUDIO.

One of Kirby's early jobs was drawing the "in-betweens" on* Popeye *at Max Fleischer Studios. Kirby's frames (shown in pink) went in between key movements, giving the cartoon its fluid movement.

Undaunted, Kirby continued to draw. He joined the Boys Brotherhood Republic, an organization that taught young men responsibility. "It had its own paper, and I was the artist on [the] newspaper," Kirby said. *K's Konceptions*, his regular strip for the *BBR Reporter*, was the 16-year-old's first brush with publishing.

In 1935, Kirby got the chance to refine his drawing skills when he went to work at Max Fleischer's animation studio. As an in-betweener on cartoons like *Popeye* and *Betty Boop*, it was his job to draw characters "in between" their key actions, thereby simulating fluid motions. This tedious, repetitive task helped Kirby develop the polish and speed for which he would later become noted.

The skills he cultivated there served him well in his next job at Lincoln Newspaper Features, which produced and distributed comic strips and other features for subscribing newspapers. Kirby's work in this company included contributions to short-lived strips such as *The Black Buccaneer*, *Detective Riley*, and *Socko the Sea Dog* as well as to one-panel editorial cartoons. With this experience in hand, Kirby made an easy transition to the fledgling comic book industry.

The Pre-Simon Years

In 1937, Samuel Maxwell Iger and Will Eisner formed a studio and began furnishing finished material to the booming comic book publishing field. One of their early jobs was to put together the oversized *Jumbo Comics* for the new Fiction House Magazines. Strips entitled *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *Wilton of the West*, which appeared in September 1938's *Jumbo Comics* #1, were Kirby's first published comic book work.

Opposite: Perhaps the creation most associated with Jack Kirby, this Captain America figure leaped from the cover of* Captain America *#100, his second solo series.

The early issues of Fox's **Blue Bolt** *were the first comic book collaborations of Simon and Kirby.*

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Red Raven *was Kirby's first work for Timely Comics, the company that would later become Marvel.*

At about this time, the impact of DC's Superman character was being felt throughout the industry. "It was well conceived, well drawn, and we admired the people who produced it," Kirby said. Indeed, Superman was admired so much that he soon inspired legions of other superheroes. By 1939, the Golden Age of comics was in full swing. As publishers sprang up to take advantage of the boom, the field was wide open for aspiring comic artists.

"I began to go up to the [various] offices and leave samples of my work, and I began to sell my work that way," Kirby said. He soon landed a job at Fox Features Syndicate, which produced both newspaper strips and comic books. Kirby worked on the *Blue Beetle* newspaper strip there in 1940, his first experience with a costumed superhero.

The Simon and Kirby Team

It was at Fox that Kirby met his future partner, Joe Simon. Two years Kirby's elder, Simon had started his comic book career at art packaging studio Funnies Inc., where editor Lloyd Jacquet and artists Bill Everett, Carl Burgos, and others created comics for publishers much the same way that the Eisner/Iger studio did. Funnies Inc. produced comics for publishers such as Timely Comics, which became Marvel Comics, and Curtis Publishing Co., which also published the *Saturday Evening Post*. At Fox, Simon created characters like the Fiery Mask for Marvel and the Blue Bolt for Curtis's comic imprint, Novelty Press. He became Marvel's first editor in 1939.

But Simon continued to freelance for other publishers, including Fox Features, where he met Kirby. To ease his considerable workload, Simon recruited Kirby's help, and *Blue Bolt* #2, cover dated July 1940, became their first collaboration. The two quickly developed a unique partnership, with each able to handle any of the various aspects of producing a comic story as needed. "We both collaborated closely on stories and art," Kirby revealed. "I would pencil and ink, Joe would pencil and ink, and we did whatever we had to do to get things done."

Around this time, Jacob Kurtzberg adopted the name Jack Kirby. Simon speculated that the artist first started signing his work Kirby because he didn't want Fox to know that he was freelancing. The creator later legally changed his name to Kirby.

Kirby and Simon began to freelance for other publishers, including Fawcett Comics, where they produced the first issue of *Captain Marvel Adventures* and contributed to *Wow* #1. At about this time, they also began their association with Marvel Comics. Their first work at Marvel was the production of *Red Raven Comics* #1. Although Kirby didn't have a hand in the creation of Red Raven's story, the second story featured the mythological speedster Mercury and was Kirby's first work for Marvel. He and Simon went on to create features for *Marvel Mystery Comics*.

Rising feelings of patriotism prompted by the threat of Nazism in Europe inspired Simon and Kirby to create Captain America in late 1940. Kirby asserted that Captain America was the obvious response to the climate of the times. "We developed Captain America because that was the general feeling at the time," he said. "We couldn't do anything else. If you had to come up with something, it would have had to have been a character like Captain America. The times were very turbulent, very patriotic, and it was a time to be an American. So in the world of comic art, we had to develop characters like Captain America. It was a natural thing to do."

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One of Simon and Kirby's first assignments was to work on **Adventure Comics**, *revamping characters such as the original Sandman (above) and Manhunter (at right).*

It was also a wild success from the very beginning. The Captain premiered in *Captain America Comics* #1, cover dated March 1941, and immediately made an impression on the American consciousness. From the cover of that issue, which showed Cap socking Hitler on the jaw, to the patriotic costume and shield, the character struck a chord with an American public ready for war. The finishing touch was one of comics's most memorable villains. "The Red Skull was kind of a showpiece," Kirby said. "We needed a Nazi spy who had to be spectacular in some way, so Joe and I conjured up the Red Skull, and he was an immediate hit. The readers—they loved to see him in the stories."

The pair had been contracted to produce only 10 issues of *Captain America*. In the meantime, Simon, the duo's businessman, had gotten them a better deal from National Periodical Publications, which later became DC. They completed their 10 *Captain America* issues and created the Young Allies for Marvel before heading for the home of Superman and Batman.

But rather than working on DC's heavy hitters, Simon and Kirby's first job was to revamp the original Sandman, who had a regular feature in *Adventure Comics*. The character, which had been created with a very Shadowish cloak and hat, had been given a pair of yellow-and-purple superhero tights just before Simon and Kirby's arrival. The duo completed his evolution from pulp magazine-inspired character to comic book superhero. While he had formerly put crooks to sleep with doses of sleeping gas, he now did so mainly with his fists. The Simon and Kirby Sandman premiered in *Adventure Comics* #72 (March 1942).

In the next issue of *Adventure Comics*, the pair revamped a rather plain adventure feature called *Paul Kirk, Manhunter*. Manhunter also became a costumed superhero fighting criminals in exotic locales all over the world.

Next, the two returned to the kid gang concept that they had originated at Marvel with the Young Allies. Their first DC kid gang, the Newsboy Legion, made its debut in *Star Spangled Comics* #7 (April 1942). This group of crime-fighting kids was aided by a shield-carrying hero named the Guardian, who was really policeman Jim Harper in disguise. With the Newsboy Legion, Simon and Kirby perfected the kid gang concept that would serve them so well during their collaboration.

"The kid gang comics were a natural part of my life, and it was something I knew very well," Kirby explained. "What I did was take the kids from my environment and put them into strips. There was always one tough kid in every strip, and that kid would be modeled on myself." Simon and Kirby combined their successful kid gang formula with the war comics genre to create the Boy Commandos in 1942. The Commandos premiered in *Detective Comics* #64 and became popular enough to receive their own series that same winter.

Over the next two years, Simon and Kirby continued to prosper at DC. However, their careers were interrupted by the United States's entry into World War II, during which both served in the army. Before leaving for the battlefield, they raced to build up a backlog of stories that could be used while they were gone, as did their war-bound colleagues. After the war, Simon and Kirby returned to do a small amount of work for DC on familiar titles like *Adventure* and *Star Spangled Comics*, but then began to concentrate on an abortive line of titles for Harvey Comics.

Kirby and Simon "developed Captain America because that was the general feeling at the time," Kirby said. "The times were very turbulent, very patriotic, and it was a time to be an American.... It was a natural thing to do."

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Captain America Comics ***was Kirby and Simon's patriotic response to the world events of the day. The comic debuted a year before the United States even entered World War II. Note the pointed shield and exposed neck and face on the Captain's costume; except for those details, it has remained nearly unchanged for over 50 years!***

Where Monsters Dwell ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc.

Monsters like Taboo, Grottu, Sporr, and Fin Fang Foom (above), not to mention the occasional Martian (below), were Marvel mainstays before superheroes became popular again in the '60s.

The line, which included *Stuntman* and *Boy Explorers*, never really got off the ground because of distribution problems.

The superhero genre was on the decline by this point in the late '40s, but the resilient duo labored to change with the times. They tried their hand at crime comics such as Prize Publications's *Headline Comics* and *Justice Traps the Guilty* and even children's humor comics like *Punch & Judy Comics* for Hillman Periodicals. The Simon and Kirby magic came back into focus when they created the romance comic genre with *Young Romance* #1 for Prize in 1947. *Young Romance* became extremely successful over the next few years, spawning several imitators.

With the groundbreaking success of *Young Romance* under their belts, the duo went on to produce a number of other successful books in the post-Golden Age era of the early 1950s. Those books included *Boys' Ranch*, another variation on the kid gang theme for Harvey, and Prize Publications's *Black Magic*, a horror comic that took advantage of the rising popularity of that genre. Simon and Kirby's output was incredibly eclectic during this period, including everything from Prize's *Fighting American*, a parody of their own Captain America, to Prize's bizarre *Strange World of Your Dreams*, which used dreams as the basis for its stories.

Kirby credited the incredible range of his storytelling abilities to his parents. "I was raised in an atmosphere of strong storytelling, a variety storytelling," he said. "My parents came from Europe, and all the European legends came here with them. The European legends were just wonderful to learn about, and my mother was a storyteller. She left that impression with me, and I love it. I love to tell stories just like my mother did, and that is what I became: I'm a storyteller."

Apparently, printers and distributors agreed, because in 1954, Kirby and his partner cut deals with professionals in both trades that allowed them to create their own publishing company, Mainline Comics. Mainline's modest output included the western title *Bulls-Eye* and the war comic *Foxhole*. Unfortunately, Fredric Wertham and his anticomic psychoanalytic study, *Seduction of the Innocent*, had already caused a public backlash against comics by this time, and most small publishers, including Mainline, were forced out of the business in the mid-1950s.

While many of their contemporaries fell on hard times during this era, the legendary Simon and Kirby had little problem finding work, producing mainly romance comics. But in 1956, when Simon accepted an editorial position at Harvey, Kirby decided to move on, quietly bringing their partnership of 16 years to an end.

Monsters and More

After going solo, Kirby dabbled in supernatural and western comics for Marvel and briefly returned to comic strips. He finally ended up back at DC in late 1956, where his monster and mystery efforts on titles like *House of Mystery* and *My Greatest Adventure* peaked with the creation of the Challengers of the Unknown in *Showcase* #6 (February 1957). Survivors of a horrible plane crash, the Challengers decided that they were living on borrowed time and dedicated themselves to facing unknown dangers, including various monsters.

When Kirby jumped to Marvel the next year, he decided to make monsters the star of the show. *Strange Worlds* #1 (December 1958) contained both Kirby's first Marvel monster work and his first joint effort with Stan Lee. In collaboration with Lee, Kirby produced comics featuring bizarre monsters for titles such as *Tales to Astonish*, *Tales of Suspense*, and *Journey into Mystery*.

Born in 1922, Lee had begun working at Marvel in 1939 during Simon and Kirby's brief tenure there. In fact, Lee's first published comic work was a text piece in *Captain America* #3. He became Marvel's editor in 1941 after Simon and Kirby left for DC, and remained with the company through the lean years of the mid-1950s.

Like many comics of the '50s, the underlying theme of the monster stories was that of tech-

"The monster phenomenon got started primarily just because people were concerned about science. People were concerned about radiation and what would happen to animals and people who were exposed to that kind of thing." —Jack Kirby

™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc.

nology out of control. "The monster phenomenon got started primarily just because people were concerned about science," Kirby recalled. "People were concerned about radiation and what would happen to animals and people who were exposed to that kind of thing."

Those pressing concerns translated into great entertainment, though, and the monsters became immensely popular for a brief time. "I guess one of the most popular would be Fin Fang Foom," Kirby recalled. "The kids liked him and I enjoyed doing him. I loved their reaction."

The Marvel Age

It was Kirby's rapport with his fans that allowed him to be so successful during the Silver Age. While other characters lived in a restrictive, two-dimensional world, Kirby's creations seemed to live in the same world as the readers, and had many of the same problems.

While continuing to work on the Marvel monster titles, he also began to handle the westerns, such as *Kid Colt Outlaw*, *Two-Gun Kid*, and *Rawhide Kid*. However, it soon became apparent that the comic book market was changing yet again. "Superheroes to me were always the right thing to do," Kirby said, and he was ready when they came back.

He returned to superheroes in the Silver Age by way of a brief reunion with former partner Joe Simon in 1959 on Archie's *Double Life of Private Strong* and *Adventures of the Fly*. *Private Strong* revived Archie's Golden Age hero the Shield, although this Shield had little in common with his predecessor other than his name and a patriotic viewpoint. As the title suggests, Strong was both a soldier and the superhero who had superspeed, the ability to project bolts of energy, and a grab bag of assorted other powers. The Fly, like the yet-to-be-created Spider-Man, had the abilities and proportional strength of his insect counterpart, including superstrength, the ability to walk on walls, and flight. Kirby did two issues of each series.

He next tested the superhero waters at Marvel with a prototype or tryout character called Dr. Droom. Although he didn't wear a costume, Droom was a mystical hero very much in the Dr. Strange mold. He possessed typical supernatural powers such as levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, and mind control. Droom's tales were buried among the monster stories in *Amazing Adventures* (vol. 1), where he lasted from issue #1 (June 1961) until issue #6. In the meantime, Kirby was asked to start work on a superhero team comic for Marvel.

Martin Goodman, Marvel's publisher at the time, had learned that his rivals at DC were having phenomenal success with their new *Justice League of America* title, so he asked his crew to put out a team book as well. After getting the word from Goodman, Lee wrote a two-page outline for the first issue of the new title and gave it to Kirby. Kirby turned that outline into *Fantastic Four* #1, a stunning variation on the concept he had developed for the Challengers of the Unknown.

In their attempt to "beat the commies" in the space race, Reed Richards, his pilot buddy Ben Grimm, Reed's fiancée Sue Storm, and Sue's kid brother Johnny took off in an experimental rocket bound for the moon. But the ship was inadequately shielded against the Van Allen radiation belt that circled the Earth, and the quartet crash-landed back on Earth to discover that they had gained fantastic powers.

X-Men and Fantastic Four™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc.

Although they were like the Challengers in some ways, the now-famous team introduced in *Fantastic Four* #1 in November 1961 was in other ways unlike any superhero team ever seen. They argued with each other as much as they fought evil. They worried about paying their bills as much as they worried about defeating the bad guys. In other words, they were basically human.

Fantastic Four, originally bimonthly, went monthly with issue #7. In the meantime, Lee and Kirby had brought back the Golden Age Marvel character the Sub-Mariner and created one of Marvel's most famous villains, Dr. Doom. The title started receiving fan mail shortly after the first issue hit the stands, something that was almost without precedent at Marvel. In addition to praising the

Tales to Astonish and *Journey into Mystery* ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc.

Kirby helped Marvel create a universe of heroes, which made Marvel the industry giant.

Lee/Kirby team, much of the mail asked when they were going to start doing more superheroes.

Kirby and Lee soon answered their fans' pleas with a comic book universe, creating heroes with superhuman abilities and human failings. They followed up *Fantastic Four* with *The Incredible Hulk* in May 1962. Like the members of the FF, the Hulk was a radiation-created superhero with plenty of human shortcomings.

Next, monster comics were converted into superhero titles. At the same time he was designing the cover of *Amazing Fantasy* #15, the debut of Spider-Man, Kirby teamed with Lee to create Thor for *Journey into Mystery* #83 (both issues were cover dated August 1962). In the monster title *Tales to Astonish*, Lee and Kirby simply chose a character—Hank Pym, the diminutive Ant-Man—who had appeared in the series earlier that year and gave him a costume. *Tales of Suspense* became the last monster book to fall, succumbing to the power of Iron Man in March 1963. By this time, all of the Marvel monster comics of the late '50s had either been transformed into superhero books or canceled.

And Kirby and Lee continued to pour it on. Kirby was doing eight to 10 Marvel comics per month by 1963: he and Lee added the new titles *Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandos*, *Avengers*, and *X-Men* to the ranks that year. Through the remainder of 1963 and the beginning of 1964, the foundation of the Marvel Universe fell into place.

It was a universe unlike any ever seen. Marvel had flirted with interbook continuity in the Golden Age with numerous Human Torch/Sub-Mariner battles, but in the new Marvel Universe, you knew that what the Incredible Hulk did in his comic last month would have an effect on the Fantastic Four, and vice versa. This level of consistency between multiple comics was unprecedented. At the heart of it all were Kirby and Lee, seeming more like chroniclers of tales they had seen on the way into the office than comic book creators.

In 1965, with the Marvel Universe running smoothly, Kirby evidently turned his attention to changing his art style. Devices now known as "Kirby machines"—massive, angular, complex-looking machines that exuded importance yet had no discernible function—began appearing in Mr. Fantastic's lab, Dr. Doom's castle, and other locales. Flying vehicles, once basic cone-nosed and fin-tailed rockets, became exotically shaped ships bristling with ominous-looking contraptions. At the same time, Kirby's human figures took on the massive, indestructible quality that became his trademark. He also experimented with photographic collages during this period.

These shifts seem to be a prelude to Kirby's interest in exploring more cosmically oriented subjects, which he investigated throughout the remainder of his career. He first experimented with new comic mythologies in *Fantastic Four* #48, which introduced the Silver Surfer and Galactus. "Galactus in actuality is a sort of god," Kirby explained. "He is beyond reproach, beyond anyone's opinion. In a way, he is a kind of a Zeus, who fathered Hercules. He is his own legend, and of course, he and the Silver Surfer are sort of modern legends, and they are designed to be that way." Thereafter, both *Fantastic Four* and *Thor* took on a cosmic quality that had not been present in any comics before. Kirby was creating new gods to explain the mysteries of the universe, surely heady stuff for his readers in the mid-'60s, or even today, for that matter.

Kirby was at his finest in the Silver Age while chronicling these cosmic epics, in which he strove to interweave the gods of the past with his own mythology. Thor and Hercules would fight side by side with (or against) Galactus, the High Evolutionary, or the Celestials. Kirby finished out his tenure at Marvel on *Fantastic Four*, *Thor*, and *Captain America*.

Kirby left Marvel to create DC's* Fourth World. *The books, including* New Gods *(right), lost popularity quickly, but great villains such as Darkseid (left) endured.

Darkseid and *New Gods* ™ & © DC Comics.

The Fourth World and Yonder

In 1970, then DC publisher Carmine Infantino made Kirby an unprecedented offer, giving him complete creative control over his work. Kirby took over the struggling *Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen* with issue #133. *Jimmy Olsen*, and three titles of Kirby's creation, *Forever People*, *Mister Miracle*, and *New Gods*, became the basis of the Fourth World Saga. Fourth World characters included Darkseid, Lightray, and the many other denizens of Apokolips and New Genesis.

"I felt that we ourselves were without a mythology. Even the Saxons had their own mythology, and I thought that there was a new mythology needed for our times," Kirby explained. "So I created that. Darkseid and Orion [are like] Zeus and Hercules, a father and son. And it has been that way with all mythology."

The four Fourth World titles chronicled that saga in novellike form, creating a complexity that was unfortunately far beyond what comic readers were accustomed to. As a result, most of the Fourth World saga was discontinued after less than a year. Eighteen and 16 issues, respectively, of *Mister Miracle* and the separate but similarly themed *Demon* were printed under Kirby's tenure. Kirby then turned to apocalyptic themes with the postnuclear world of *Kamandi* and the far future of *OMAC*. He finished out his time at DC with his new version of the Sandman, whose series lasted six issues.

Returning to Marvel in late 1975, Kirby handled a variety of assignments, including *Captain America* and *The Invaders*, and embarked on another attempt at a new mythology with *The Eternals*. Revisiting his previous themes, *The Eternals* combined the mythical characters and themes of the past with characters of the future, namely the race-judging Celestials. In addition to exploring mythology, Kirby seemed intent on creating new and different kinds of characters at this point in his career. He rounded out his final stint at Marvel by creating the offbeat Devil Dinosaur and Machine Man.

In late 1978, Kirby retired from full-time duty as a comic book creator and turned his talent toward animation. He worked on conceptual drawings for the *Fantastic Four and Herbie the Robot* animated television series. Although the show failed to generate any major following, Kirby remained in animation until 1987, contributing to the designs of *Thundarr the Barbarian*, *Mr. T*, *Plastic Man*, *Rambo*, *Chuck Norris*, and *Laser Tag* for Ruby/Spears Productions.

After the advent of creator-owned properties in comics, Kirby continued to produce new characters. He was at the forefront of the creator-owned movement in 1981-83 with his *Captain Victory and the Galactic Rangers* and *Silver Star*, published by Pacific Comics. However, Kirby's style was not as widely accepted as it once had been, and both titles were canceled in early 1984 due to low sales.

But Kirby proceeded to push for creator rights on another front: he attempted to obtain pages of his original comic art from Marvel. His quest led to a much-publicized public furor involving not only the pages of art but the particulars of the creation of the Marvel Universe itself. Kirby eventually received nearly 2,000 of his pages from Marvel in 1987 after signing a release form stating that he had no claim to the copyright of the material contained in the pages. Unfortunately, it's believed that most of the estimated 13,000 pages Kirby drew for Marvel during his career were lost or destroyed over the years.

Such distractions did nothing to diminish the creator's enthusiasm for comics. Kirby continued to take an active role in the industry he helped create. He got the chance to create new characters and explore mythology in his final works. Topps Comics launched its "Kirbyverse" in 1993 with the four-issue *Secret City Saga* mini-series, starring such Kirby characters as Night Glider, Bombast, and Captain Glory. The Kirbyverse was conceived to be chronicled by others inspired by Kirby's vision. Currently, Topps is launching the five-issue *Victory*, a mini-series heralding the return of Captain Victory, who hasn't seen print since his Pacific title was canceled. *Victory* will lead into an all-new *Captain Victory* monthly and *The Ninth Men*, starring Night Glider and company.

In this year's *Phantom Force*, published by both Image Comics and Genesis West, Kirby once again had free reign with his creations. Combining the sagas of rank-and-file superheroes with his more cosmic concepts, Kirby weaved a tapestry that went beyond the domain of superhero comics into the realm of a new mythology.

Kirby died in his Thousand Oaks, Calif., home of heart failure on February 6, 1994. He was 76. His death was not just the passing of a single man; it was the passing of an era. ☆

William A. Christensen and Mark Seifert are freelance writers based in Champaign, Ill.

An invaluable reference for this article was* The Art of Jack Kirby *by Ray Wyman Jr., published in 1992 by the Blue Rose Press of Orange, Calif. It is the quintessential book for any Kirby enthusiast and is highly recommended.

Kirby's work in recent years included* Phantom Force *published by Image (below) and Genesis West, and the* "Kirbyverse" *be created for Topps Comics (at bottom).

PHANTOM FORCE ™ & © JACK KIRBY, MICHAEL THEODEAUX, AND RICHARD FRENCH

JACK KIRBY'S SECRET CITY SAGA ™ & © JACK KIRBY

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FROM Comic TO Cartridge

Acclaim programs Maximum Carnage for maximum excitement.

Comic book publisher Marvel and video game manufacturer Acclaim meet regularly to speak about developing games based on Marvel characters or storylines. One day, Marvel mentioned "Maximum Carnage," a crossover starring Spider-Man, Venom, and Carnage.

"As soon as the three of us heard it," says Vice President of Creative and Product Development Paul Samulski, one of Acclaim's representatives at the meeting, "we realized we had to come back and say, 'This has got to be the next Marvel [game] from Acclaim.'"

The companies had worked together on several games before, so they were quick to get down to business. Once the formal agreement was signed, Acclaim began working on several ideas for the game. These were shown to Marvel, and one was selected for development.

"We've done other Marvel storylines before, so from the start we knew that we wanted to keep to the storyline pretty closely," says game producer Mark Flitman, who was also at the initial meeting with Marvel. "But we also have to keep in mind that people are going to play the game. It's more important to have fun than keep strictly to the storyline."

What they came up with was a mix of action and plot that captured the flavor of "Maximum Carnage." It's not a blow-by-blow retelling, however; subplots or character development that didn't pertain to action, such as Mary Jane's quandary about smoking, were left out because they just didn't fit into the game. "Unless we're doing a role-playing game, we really have to cut to the chase," Samulski explains.

After getting Marvel's approval of the treatment, Acclaim began to design the characters. This is one of the most important parts in turning a comic book into a video game: Marvel won't sanction game characters unless they look, act, and move perfectly like the original comic characters. More importantly, gamers and comic book fans won't feel

SPIDER-MAN, CARNAGE, VENOM, AND ALL RELATED CHARACTERS ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

BY CRAIG E. ENGLER

they're seeing and playing the real characters.

Flitman says his designers do an excellent job of getting the look and feel of the characters down because, quite simply, they're huge comics fans. He says he's walked in on more than one argument between his designers over which superhero could beat which in a fight, or when a hero should be allowed to do something out of character.

"We have a number of designers here who probably know more about Marvel than they do about Acclaim," Samulski confirms. "We've got some guys here that are like walking history books of Marvel."

Another reason Acclaim can incorporate the subtleties of comic book characters and settings into the play mechanics of its games is the ready supply of information from Marvel, including a copy of each comic Marvel publishes. The designers are also privy to story scripts, character descriptions, artwork, and just about anything else the publisher has on file. At one point, Marvel even sent over the floor plans to the Fantastic Four's headquarters, which Spider-Man and Venom visit during the game, because the designers wanted to make sure the building's layout was accurate.

At the beginning of the project, Acclaim's designers often worked from written scripts because none of the "Maximum Carnage" artwork had even been started. Samulski says that the scripts gave the design team valuable, often surprising, insights into how comics are created. "You got a chance to see how much of it actually changes as [the comic creators] get into it," he says. "A lot of it is made up as they go along and [is] constantly changed. We also tried to work off that in the game."

The designers occasionally visited Marvel to see how the comics were progressing. Sometimes they came away with extra information to use in the game. "We were there at one time when they still had the boards that they were doing the inking on," Samulski says. "They took the boards down and Xeroxed them for us."

The production team worked closely with the Spider-Man staff, including writers, artists, and Spider-Man editor Danny Fingeroth. Although Fingeroth was heavily involved in the initial game design, he stepped into the background once things got under way. But Fingeroth, whom Samulski describes as the absolute be-all end-all Spider-Man expert, was always ready to help resolve difficulties or answer questions.

Between the two companies, as many as 25 people worked on the *Maximum Carnage* video game at one time, including artists, musicians, writers, and programmers. Acclaim, which does none of its programming in-house, contracted the job out to Manchester (England)-based Software Creations.

A lot of the work involved programming the game and then playing it endlessly to see how things worked. Samulski says a 10-minute approval session at Marvel often turned into two hours or more of play time as everyone in the room took a turn at the controls.

Marvel's representatives spent a lot of time making sure the characters had all the subtle tricks and moves from the comic. Even a character's posture was important. At one point, designers had Spider-Man standing

Some panels from the comics were animated for the game. Look how close this screen (below) is to the panel from *Web of Spider-Man* #101 (at bottom).

during a scene. Marvel suggested it would be more accurate if he were hanging upside down. The change was made.

The end result was a game that really had the feel of "Maximum Carnage," Flitman says. A player can choose to play either Venom or Spider-Man, depending on his or her temperament. "Venom, across the board, is a little more brutal, while Spider-Man is more agile," he explains. "Spider-Man may web someone and detain them, while Venom may shoot his symbiote out, pull someone in, and pound them. Every move, I would say, has a little difference. On a certain level, you get into their heads."

The game also features cameo appearances by several other Marvel characters, such as the Black Cat, Dagger, Firestar, Iron Fist, Deathlok, Morbius, and Captain America. The villains are straight out of the "Maximum Carnage" storyline and include Carnage, Doppelganger, Carrion, Shriek, and Demogoblin, as well as their friends and associates.

The non-player characters are controlled by a complex artificial intelligence (AI). The characters are "nothing until you give them their intelligence, and the intelligence you give them has to be in line with the intelligence they have as Marvel characters," Samulski notes. "You have to understand those characters to be able to go in and create intelligence for them."

The AI governs not only how the bad guys attack but also how the good guys react to the character you're playing. For instance, Flitman explains, when a character appears to lend the hero a hand, if you're playing Venom, they'll tend to hit the bad guys harder and act more aggressively. If you're Spider-Man, they'll help you subdue the villains without using excessive force.

To help move the story along, Acclaim included narrative scenes between levels to reveal key plot points to the player. For *Maximum Carnage*, the company decided to stay away from the traditional still scenes that most comic book-based games use because, as Samulski says, "That's kind of a yawn."

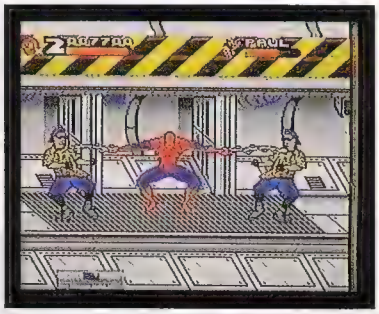
Instead, Acclaim took still frames from the comic and animated them. If a comic book showed Venom sitting atop a car and pounding its roof, the game would show Venom's arms actually moving up and down as they rained one blow after another upon the car. Each narrative scene ends in a still shot taken directly from the book. "It's a little more interesting because you can see it coming together," Samulski says. "At the end of the sequence, you get to see the frame in its entirety as it ended up in the comic book."

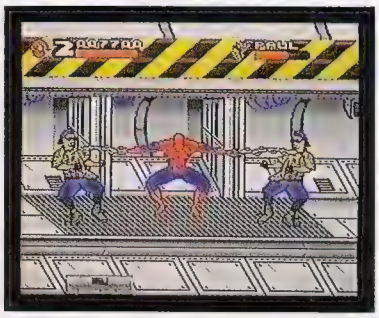
Once all of these elements came together, Acclaim created a "beta copy" of the game for testing and approval. A "beta" is basically a finished game that still has a few bugs in it. *Maximum Carnage* hit the beta stage in May, and Samulski expected to receive final approval on it that same month. Once approval has been given and the bugs removed, the game will be ready for production.

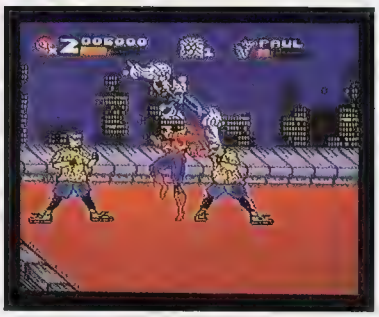
Transforming the "Maximum Carnage" storyline from a video game treatment to beta status took just over a year, Samulski says. Like most games, it took a lot of work to create—but it was also a lot of fun. ☆

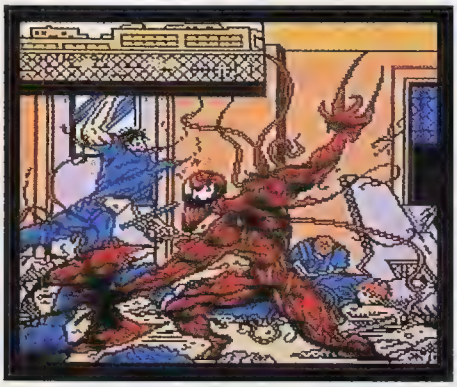
Craig E. Engler is a freelance writer based in Basking Ridge, N.J. He'd do anything to meet Tori Amos, even write an article for Wizard.

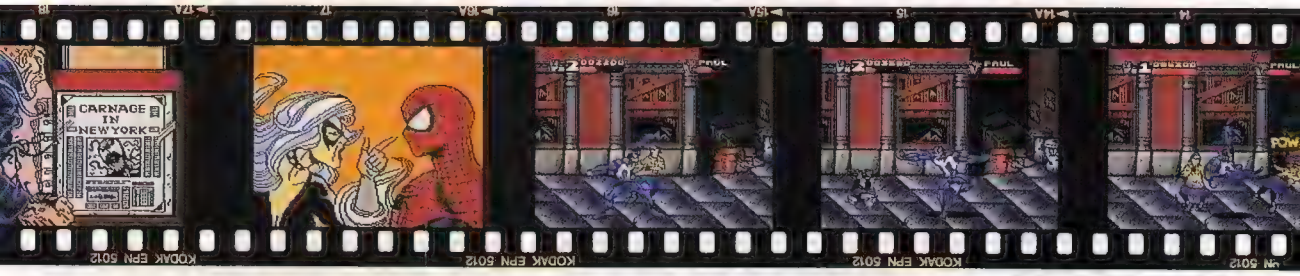
Here's a taste of what the game will feature: great action and animated panels direct from the books! How kickin' is this stuff gonna look and sound runnin' around on a TV screen?!?











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Grand Prize (One winner)

One winner walks away with the entire Image Universe, from *Youngblood* #1 to *Spawn/Batman* and every regularly released comic in between! That means you can win:

Batman/Spawn; *Bloodstrike* #1-#9; *Brigade* (mini-series) #1-#4 & #1A (gold foil); *Brigade* (series) #0-#8; *Codename: Stryke Force* #1-#3; *Cyberforce* (mini-series) #0-#4; *Cyberforce* (series) #1-#3; *Darker Image* #1, #1A (black and white), and #1B (gold); *Deathblow* #1-#4; *Deathmate: Prologue, Black, Yellow, Blue, Red,* and *Epilogue* as well as all *Deathmate* gold editions; *Extreme* #0 & #0A; *Extreme Tour Book* #1 & #1C (gold); *Freak Force* #1-#4; *Gen13* #1-#2; *Image* #0; *Images of Shadowhawk* #1-#3; *Kindred* #1; *The Maxx* #1-#7 & #1A (glow in the dark); *Newmen* #1; *1963* #1-#6 & #1A (gold); *The Pact* #1; *Phantom Force* #1; *Pitt* #1-#4 & #1A (gold); *Prophet* #1-#4 & #4A (Platt cover); *Savage Dragon* (mini-series) #1-#3; *Savage Dragon* TPB; *Savage Dragon vs. the Savage Megaton Man* #1 & #1A (gold); *Savage Dragon* (series) #1-#9; *Shadowhawk* #1-#4 & #1B (newsstand); *Shadowhawk II* #1-#4; *Shadowhawk III* #1-#4 & #1A (gold); *Shaman's Tears* #1-#2; *Spawn* #1-#18; *Spawn/Batman*; *Splitting Image* #1-#2; *StormWatch* #0-#9, *Sourcebook* #1, and *Yearbook* #1; *Stupid* #1; *SuperPatriot* #1-#4; *Supreme* #1-#11 & #1A (gold); *Team Youngblood* #1-#8; *Trencher* #1-#4; *Tribe* #1 & #1A (ivory); *Troll* #1; *Union* #1-#4; *Vanguard* #1-#6; *WildC.A.T.s* #1-#9, #1A (gold), #2B (no prism cover), #4A (red-foil *Wizard* card), *Sourcebook* #1, *Special* #1, *Trilogy* #1-#3, and *Yearbook* #1; *WildStar: Sky Zero* #1-#4 & #1A (gold); *Youngblood* #0-#4 & #0B (gold); and *Youngblood Strikefile* #1-#4, #1A (gold), and *Yearbook* #1.

And hey, just for nostalgia's sake, we'll throw in *WetWorks* #1, too.

THE ONLY WAY TO WIN ALL THIS NEAT STUFF IS TO MATCH THE FIREARMS PICTURED BELOW WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS. THE CHARACTERS MAY NOT CARRY THE WEAPON AS STANDARD ISSUE, BUT THEY CARRIED 'EM AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER. JUST MATCH THE LETTER OF THE GUN TO THE HERO AND BOOM, YOU'RE ARMED AND READY.

ONCE YOU'VE FIGURED OUT WHICH GUN BELONGS TO WHOM, FILL OUT THE OFFICIAL IMAGE CONTEST ENTRY FORM BELOW AND SEND THE WHOLE THING OFF TO:

Image Contest
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

Better start searchin'—this has gotta get where it's goin' by August 8, 1994!

WINNERS!

A hearty congratulations to **Linda Moore** of Huntington Beach, California, the grand prize winner of *Wizard* #33's Catwoman Contest, as well as the 75 other winners!
Answer: 54 kitties (53 black cats, plus the cat on the bottle in the trash can.)

CONTEST

Image Contest

NAME (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) _____ AGE _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (DON'T FORGET YOUR AREA CODE) _____

GUN **A** BELONGS TO: _____

GUN **B** BELONGS TO: _____

GUN **C** BELONGS TO: _____

GUN **D** BELONGS TO: _____

GUN **E** BELONGS TO: _____

The Fine Print

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press and Image Comics, their immediate families, and anybody who complained about *Image* #0 being late. Print your name, age, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the names of the heroes who used guns A, B, C, D, and E on the official entry form, a three-by-five-inch index card, or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry to Image Contest, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become the property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winner. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the name of the contest winner and are not transferable. If any regularly released book published by Image Comics after *Youngblood* #1 and before April 6, 1994, that was not included in the list of prizes above is discovered within six months of the winner's receipt of the prizes, that book will be made available to the contest winner. After the six-month period has expired, Wizard Press will not contribute any further prizes to the contest winner. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. Anyone know why you drive on a parkway and park in a driveway? **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by August 8, 1994.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winner will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on August 9, 1994, by Wizard Press.

For the name of the winner, available after August 31, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Image Winners, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just keep reading *Wizard*!

SPAWN IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF TODD MCFARLANE PRODUCTIONS; BATTALION, GRUNGE ™ & © AEGIS ENTERTAINMENT; BALLISTIC ™ & © TOP COW PRODUCTIONS; VANGUARD ™ & © ERIK LARSEN & GARY CARLSON.

TOYING around • around • around • around

WITH SEAN AUNE

SPAWN SKINNY

Here it is, my third time around at Toying Around, and already there's more than I can keep up with. Try to follow along as I touch upon several subjects this month.

First up is the latest on the Spawn toys from Todd McFarlane Productions. It seems that all the major toy chains have picked up on the new line, along with all the minor ones. Unfortunately, this may lead to some allocating of product when it's finally shipped, which means that retailers will be limited to certain amounts of product. This could result in the figures being hard to get in certain places.

All of the figures mentioned in *Wizard* #33 are still on schedule for a September or October release, including Spawn, Medieval Spawn, Overkill, the Clown, and Tremor. The Spawnmobile, Violator Monster Rig, and Spawn Alley Playset are also still on schedule. There are more figures planned for the future, but information about who they are is being kept quiet for now.

Each Spawn toy will come with a 16-page full-size comic book about the character, thing, or place upon which the toy is based. All the books will have McFarlane covers and will be written by newcomer Eldon Aspe. Flint Henry will draw the comics for the Violator and his Monster Rig, Brad Gorby will pencil the comics that accompany Spawn and Medieval Spawn, and John Cleary will illustrate the comic packaged with the Violator Demon. As I find out more, I'll pass on the details.

In other Spawn-related news, the Mattel Hot Wheels Spawnmobile has been released and looks to be a Wal-Mart exclusive. Rumor has it that every Wal-Mart received only 10 of these cool-looking little die-cast cars. Each one comes packaged with an issue of the regular *Spawn* comic book series. (Issues tend to vary.)

While I come from the school of thought that says, "Play with the toys!," I have to say that this has the potential to be a very hot collectible and moneymaker. The Spawnmobile will have sizable appeal for several different groups, including Hot Wheels completists, comic book collectors, Spawn collectors, and toy collectors. The Spawnmobile may also be viewed as the first part of the Spawn toy line, even though the regular toy line will be produced by a different company from Mattel. Regardless, this is a good toy to pick up if you can find it.

In other Image-related toy news, Marc Silvestri's Top Cow Productions will be producing Cyberforce bendables sometime in the near future—more likely than not, this fall. Bendables (also known as "bendies") are unarticulated toys that bend but return to their original shapes. So far, four figures are being planned: Ripclaw, Stryker, Cyblade, and Impact. Each one will come packaged with both an original minicomic book (drawn by Top Cow

IMPACT, RIPCLAW, & STRYKER ™ & © TOP COW PRODUCTIONS

Hear the Village People sing, "Y-M-C-A!" Actually they're (from left) Stryker, Impact, and Ripclaw bendables and they're blasting to a store near you.

Pitt ™ & © Dale Keown

The Pitt statue, sculpted by Clayburn Moore, will be released later in the year.

artists Joe Benitez and others to be announced) and an original trading card featuring that particular character. Figures will retail for about $5.95. Begin looking for them in July or August.

Another Image statue has been announced. The Pitt statue has been designed by Randy Bowen Studios and sculpted by Clayburn Moore (profiled in last month's Toying Around). The sculpture will be made to the same scale as Moore's Savage Dragon statuette. Since the Dragon is six feet tall and Pitt is nine feet tall, this should be a pretty large piece! No price for the Pitt statue has yet been announced, but it's a safe bet that it'll be over the $150 mark. You can probably start placing orders for this in September.

Rumors seem to pop up daily about whether or not new *Star Wars* action figures are in the works, what with the reported production of three new *Star Wars* films. So far, the rumors seem to be just that. Nowhere at Toy Fair '94 was there a display of any form of action figure for these movies, except for Just Toys's already existing line of bendables. When I questioned the major toy companies, all of them laughed...except for Kenner, whose representatives seemed to get very nervous when asked if there was any truth to the rumor that it was planning to rerelease its old *Star Wars* trilogy figures. You can bet you'll hear more on this as soon as I do.

Yet another popular rumor of late has been that G.I. Joe will be changing his look towards the end of this year. According to a source at Hasbro, "He will not be the same figure that you have come to know." It's been whispered that Joe may go strictly to the old 12-inch format, but this seems rather unlikely. The most believable story thus far has been that he will switch to the very popular five-inch format *á la Star Trek* and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles by Playmates. Hasbro says that it won't make any formal announcement regarding the G.I. Joe change until later in the year.

This may provide a unique opportunity in the collectibles market. If the figures do change to the five-inch format, the current three-and-three-fourth-inch figures would essentially become a discontinued toy line. The demand for the older figures and even the more recent ones would probably climb at a fairly quick pace. It might not be a bad idea to start socking away a few of the rarer figures, like any version of Snake-Eyes or any Ninja Force figure, to name but a few.

In other "soon-to-be-canceled" news, the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers' Green Ranger with Dragonzord will soon be off the shelves. As in the original Japanese television series, the Green Ranger will die; therefore, there's no point to the toy. He will be replaced, however, with White Ranger with Tigerzord. More Power Rangers news next month.

Those of you out there who are collecting the *seaQuest DSV* figures probably want to know where the vehicles are. Here's your answer. Playmates announced it will only release them if the show is renewed for a second season, which it has. By far, the most impressive vehicle is the lights-and-sound *seaQuest DSV 2000*. Measuring approximately 24 inches in length, it's quite the piece of work.

The Nightmare Before Christmas figures seem to be the current hot toy line among collectors. Due to the relatively short production run on these figures, they've all become rather hard to locate. However, at Toy Fair this past February, I spoke to a Hasbro representative who said that the toys might very well be rereleased to coincide with the premiere of the film on video.

That's it for this month, folks. Be back in 30 when I bring you whatever juicy gossip I can dig up. Till then, see you in aisle 7C.

HOMEMADE HEROES

The four third place winners this month will receive *Vengeance of Vampirella* #1-#2 signed by Buzz and a *Darker Image* #1 signed by Sam Kieth. The two second place winners will receive a *Gambit* #1 signed by Howard Mackie and Lee Weeks, a *Rune* #1 signed by Barry Windsor-Smith, a Gold *Brigade* (mini-series) #1, and a Dark Horse cold-cast King Kong porcelain model kit. The grand prize winner will receive an *Amazing Spider-Man* #347 signed by Erik Larsen, a *Spawn/Batman* signed by Frank Miller, a *Superman: The Man of Steel* #30 signed by Louise Simonson, and a Dark Horse cold-cast King Kong porcelain model kit. If you're interested in entering the homemade figure contest, send photographs of entries to: Figure of the Month Contest, c/o Toying Around, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. (No Polaroids—and make sure you focus, dammit!)

Special thanks to Dark Horse for donating the model kits. You guys are ga-roovey!

MADMAN ™ & © MIKE ALRED

Madman, by Jeffrey Hunt of South Berwick, Maine, was made from a Toy Biz Mr. Fantastic figure and lots of putty to fill in the gaps and create the snazzy do. The yo-yo's made from spare model parts, more putty, and a piece of wire. Awesome!

GRENDEL ™ & © MATT WAGNER

"Obi-Wan...now that's a name I've not heard in a long time..."

Jeffrey T. Zverloff of Akron, Ohio, created the amazing Grendel Prime from a Toy Biz Deadpool figure. The poncho is made from the pocket of a T-shirt, the belt from a Toy Biz Wonder Woman lasso, and the sword from scrap plastic.

WILDC.A.T.S ™ & © AEGIS ENTERTAINMENT INC. DBA WILDSTORM PRODUCTIONS

"Get that Coda assassin! Kill he...hey, she's got a camera. Everybody huddle together."

The mighty WildC.A.T.s team, crafted by Kevin Hee of San Francisco, Calif., was made from...well, we don't have room to name 'em all, but they're all made from Toy Biz figures.

SHADOWMAN ™ & © VOYAGER COMMUNICATIONS

"For the millionth time—no, I'm not Bob Marley!"

Shadowman here was a Toy Biz Punisher until Michael Walstrom of Ames, Iowa, had some free time on his hands.

CABLE (OH, HE'S SO CUTE!) ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

"Hee hee...hey, Stwyfe, I'm gonna bwow your bwains out!"

This is adorable! Hey, I wonder if Baby Cable knows the X-Babies from the Drawing Board on page 57? Anyway, Robert Cinnamon of Lawrenceburg, Ky., made li'l Nate here from a Precious Moments doll. Great job, Robert.

SASQUATCH ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

"Listen, punk, you call me Bigfoot one more time and you'll see just how big it is!"

The massive Sasquatch is made from some sort of Masters of the Universe figure and was crafted by Marshall W. Brooks Jr. of Redford, Mich.

THE REN & STIMPY SHOW AND POWDERED TOAST MAN ™ & © 1994 NICKELODEON. SPIDER-MAN ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP.

"Hurry up! Take the picture! Take the picture! I gotta go so bad I can taste it!"

Powdered Toast Man, made from...something (a Toy Biz figure, no doubt, but who?), hails from Los Angeles, Calif., and was crafted by the talented hands of Domingo Lopez. Is that real toast?

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Bimbo

Gramps

ECHO PRODUCTIONS, INC.

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PALMER'S PICKS

I Dream of Jim

While most comic books simply ask their spectators to read their story, the comics of Jim Woodring engage the audience in a truly unique experience. It's impossible to "just read" Woodring's work; you have to immerse yourself in it in order to uncover meaning. Flip through Woodring's comics and you'll find yourself floating in a puzzling world full of nightmarish visions and beautifully spiritual apparitions.

Woodring has led quite an interesting life. Now a pre-eminent alternative cartoonist, he at one point or another worked as a garbage man, lived a bohemian lifestyle in the woods, and designed animated characters for Ruby/Spears Productions. While at Ruby/Spears, he produced *Jim*, a unique journal of dreams and personal experiences. In 1987, these comics led to a *Jim* magazine, which showed off Woodring's talent for transcribing dreams and writing stream-of-conscious narratives.

After four issues of the *Jim* magazine, Woodring went to Tundra Publishing to start *Tantalizing Stories* with *Gnatrat* and *20 Nude Dancers 20* creator Mark Martin. The series began with a dazzling full-color special featuring Frank, an anthropomorphic cartoon creature from Woodring's warped mind. Martin added his Montgomery Wart stories to round out one of the few comics that could be enjoyed by anybody at any age. Even though Woodring and Martin earned industry-wide accolades for the color special and the subsequent black-and-white series, *Tantalizing Stories* was abruptly canceled after Kitchen Sink bought Tundra in mid-1993.

Despite the premature end of the collaboration between Woodring and Martin, there's recently been renewed interest in Woodring's comics. His work from the *Jim* magazine has resurfaced in *The Book of Jim*, probably one of the most beautifully presented reprint books available. New material from Woodring is available in a second volume of *Jim* from Fantagraphics. This new series combines the full-color adventures of Frank with dream-inspired short stories and advertisements for Jimland Novelties, a collection of homemade knickknacks that includes hand-bound books of poetry and comics, masks made from Jim's face, and other assorted peculiar playthings.

It's difficult to describe Woodring's work. On the surface, his comics are readily accessible. His black-and-white illustrations range from rich ink-wash renderings to meticulously formed line drawings. Woodring's color paintings are accomplished depictions of hauntingly familiar images that draw you into another world, one full of unreal objects and creatures.

Woodring's stories are like his paintings: inviting at first glance, they're full of hidden meanings that will often leave you puzzled and frustrated. But these contradictions are what make you want to return to Woodring's work. You have to figure out what a certain symbol means or uncover the importance of some throwaway background object.

Woodring has managed to recreate complex unconscious experiences on a simple comic page. The images in his comics are like the dreams that flash across your mind just after you wake up but before you fully regain consciousness. His autobiographical dream comics flow like stories, but they're built on the inexplicable transitions and vague figments that are characteristic of dreams. Woodring's Frank comics are more linear, yet they're still full of inde-

Jim Woodring has managed to recreate complex unconscious experiences on a simple comic page.

Nightmare next-door neighbor: an unnamed character from the cover of *Jim* (vol. 1) #1

For Montgomery Wart, happiness is only a pumpkin head away. Top right: Frank's "guard dog" gives birth.

scribable events and bizarre creatures.

Most of Woodring's dream comics feature Jim himself, but his most popular and endearing creation has to be Frank, an innocent character who wanders through lush, vibrant, fluid environments in numerous wordless comics. Frank's adventures and his attempts to thwart the plots of his archnemesis, Manhog, are simultaneously frightening, humorous, whimsical, and baffling. A "typical" Frank story reads like a Saturday-morning cartoon on acid. Characters replicate without explanation, mutate into grotesque mockeries of themselves, and generally abuse and annoy one another.

The Frank stories and Woodring's dream-inspired work are loaded with concealed symbols and meanings. Woodring's comics are populated by "souls" or "angels" that resemble multilayered, brightly colored tops. The architecture in the Frank comics and in some of the dream narratives is inspired by the curved vaults, domes, and minarets of Islamic and Arabian mosques and palaces. These and other symbols can be interpreted in many different ways. There's a deep, personal meaning behind Woodring's work, and deciphering his comics is a truly unique experience.

If you've particularly liked something I've recommended recently, or if you want to tell me that you think I have no taste in comics, feel free to type or neatly scribble your ramblings and send them to me at Palmer's Picks, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. ☆

PICK OF THE MONTH

Hepcats #12: This is the 10th chapter of Martin Wagner's "Snowblind," a powerful comic novel detailing the nightmarish trials of Erica and the shocking secrets of her past. Wagner masterfully combines detailed art and crisp writing and plotting for a truly unsettling and gripping story.

Tom Palmer Jr. is a freelance writer based in New Jersey who hates coffee and likes to sleep late.

Tom's Recommended Reading

Jim: Issues of the original *Jim*, which Woodring produced himself, and the magazine-sized *Jim*, of which Fantagraphics published four between 1987 and 1990, are not available. In December '93, Fantagraphics launched a new comic-sized *Jim* series. To order the first two issues, for $3 each, or a four-issue subscription, for $12, write Fantagraphics Books, 7563 Lake City Way, Seattle, WA 98115. *The Book of Jim*, a softcover volume, reprints highlights from Fantagraphics's first volume of *Jim*. It includes a color section reprinting the cover paintings and "Screechy Peachy," a new fully painted story. *The Book of Jim* is available for $18 from Fantagraphics at the above address.

Jimland Novelties: Woodring's strange creations are featured in this 24-page catalog. Some of the more conventional items include the Jimhair Paintbrush (made from a lock of Jim's hair), the Jim Dream-of-the-Month Club, and an assortment of T-shirts. For a free copy, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Jim Woodring, 5736 17th Ave. N.E., Seattle, WA 98105.

Tantalizing Stories: *Tantalizing Stories presents Frank in The River* was a full-color special featuring the title story and an eight-page Montgomery Wart story by Mark Martin. This was followed by a six-issue black-and-white run of *Tantalizing Stories* featuring Frank and Montgomery Wart. *Frank in The River* costs $2.95, the first four issues of *Tantalizing Stories* cost $2.25 each, and the last two are $2.50 each. Order from Kitchen Sink Press, 320 Riverside Dr., Northampton, MA 01060, and include $5 for postage.

Miscellaneous: Woodring's comics have popped up in a variety of anthologies. The first issue of the short-lived *Buzz* contains a Woodring strip featuring a character named Pulque, while #2 has an early Frank story. #1 is sold out, but #2 is available for $2.95 from Kitchen Sink. Issues #1 and #4 of Mark Martin's *Hyena* feature a Frank story, and #2 has a Pulque strip. All issues are $3.95 from Kitchen Sink. Frank has also popped up in full color and black and white in various issues of *Heavy Metal*. Woodring illustrated Scott Deschaine's *Blue Block*, available for $2.95 from Kitchen Sink, a full-color story depicting one man's resistance against a repressive futuristic society. Woodring also wrote *Freaks*, an adaptation of Tod Browning's 1932 film illustrated by F. Solano Lopez, published by Fantagraphics, and *Aliens: Labyrinth*, with art by Kilian Plunkett, for Dark Horse Comics.

Jim and Frank ™ & © Jim Woodring. Montgomery Wart ™ & © Mark Martin.

COMIC BOOK INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

CBIQ

It's time to test all that trivial comic book knowledge you've accumulated from spending hour after hour reading comics when you should've been out getting some sun. What follows are 25 of the hardest questions ever slapped together by a band of lice-ridden fanboys. We've also included the Fanboy-O-Meter, which you can use to gauge how macho or macha you are.

This month, we're grading your comic knowledge against...well, comic knowledge. The higher your score, the better fanboy you are. (That's *definitely* an oxymoron.)

score	rank
0-5	You'd get lost in New York looking for the Baxter Building
6-12	You think the Scarlet Witch is some type of rash (that's a lot funnier if you make the "W" in Witch silent)
13-19	You think Ninjak is a car defense system
20-24	You know that the Golden Age Flash is not the FTD guy
25	You can tell the difference between Lex Luthor and the Kingpin

1. Which member of the Hellfire Club died while fighting Nimrod?
A) Harry Leland
B) Donald Pierce
C) Sebastian Shaw
D) Emmanuel DaCosta

2. Why did Mary Jane turn down Peter Parker's first proposal of marriage?
A) She thought he was still seeing the Black Cat
B) She wanted to get superpowers before she married him
C) She didn't want to marry someone in a dangerous line of work
D) He wasn't "getting the job done"

3. Supergirl is actually a clone of:
A) an alternate Lana Lang.
B) Superman.
C) Starman.
D) Power Girl.

4. In *Spawn/Batman*, Batman called Spawn a:
A) monkey boy.
B) twit.
C) nitwit.
D) I don't know. Like everyone else, I stopped reading it after the first 10 or so pages.

5. What was the name of the general whose tie Wolverine sliced when he quit the Canadian government and joined the X-Men?
A) Ruthers
B) Chasen
C) Blackwell
D) Chattanooga

6. RoboCop's real name is:
A) Luthor Manning.
B) Alex Murphy.
C) Michael Collins.
D) Ted Murphy.

7. Which young "New" X-Man did Professor X meet before deciding to form the X-Men?
A) Colossus
B) Storm
C) Nightcrawler
D) Sunfire

8. Which of the following characters died in *Crisis on Infinite Earths*?
A) Wildcat II
B) Mr. Miracle II
C) Kid Psycho
D) Both A and C

9. How did the Beyonder abduct most of the superpowered characters who were in *Secret Wars*?
A) They all just appeared on the Secret Wars planet
B) He put an interdimensional gateway in Central Park
C) He created clones of all the heroes and commanded them to abduct their originals
D) He sent them all a survey stating that the first 500 superheroes to respond would get to hit Tom and Roseanne Arnold in the head with a brick

10. What name does Max Gargan go by in his supervillain persona?
A) Scorpion
B) Electro

C) The Beetle
D) Sandman

11. Spylocke is actually a:
A) Malev.
B) Spider Alien.
C) Psi-Lord.
D) Victim of Ellison.

12. What do Paste-Pot Pete, Medusa, Wizard, and Sandman have in common?
A) They were all members of the Frightful Four
B) They were all members of the Lethal Legion
C) They're all really crappy characters who will probably never appear on a *Wizard* cover
D) Both A and C

13. What was the name of the gunner in Luke Skywalker's snowspeeder in *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*?
A) Hamm
B) Wedge
C) Dack
D) A-Wedge-of-Dack-Hamm

14. When the Venom symbiote was incarcerated in the Baxter Building, it was freed by a robot probe belonging to:
A) Dr. Doom.
B) the Tinkerer.
C) Robot Master.
D) Dr. Octopus.

15. Who among the following characters has never had a kid sidekick?
A) Captain Marvel
B) The Crimson Avenger
C) Green Arrow
D) Moon Knight

16. Before the *Nick Fury vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* mini-series, S.H.I.E.L.D. stood for:
A) Supreme Headquarters Internal Expertise Legal Department.
B) Super Humanoids Intervening in Exceptionally Lethal Disputes.
C) Supreme Headquarters International Espionage Law-Enforcement Division.
D) Semi-Humanoid Instantly Edible Little Ducks.

17. Which of the following characters are elementals?
A) Tefi, Baraka, and Naiad
B) Firestorm, Swamp Thing, Red Tornado
C) Black Racer, Kwannon, and Jonni Thunder
D) Eclipso, the Spectre, and Dr. Fate

18. Which of the following crappy toy lines did not have a cartoon series patterned after it?
A) Starriors
B) Crystar
C) Robotics
D) M.U.S.C.L.E.

19. Which *Star Trek* character was in love with Spock?
A) Number One
B) Nurse Chapel
C) Yeoman Rand
D) The Gorn

20. Which superhero is a descendant of the Contraxians?
A) Jack of Hearts
B) Impossible Man
C) Black Bolt
D) Photon

21. Which Eggbreaker was reprimanded with a lobotomy?
A) Stunner
B) Rivet
C) Stronghold
D) Flashbulb

22. Robert April was the first captain of which spaceship?
A) *Excelsior*
B) *Intrepid*
C) *Argo*
D) *Enterprise*

23. DC's most recent version of Starman died while battling:
A) Darkseid.
B) Monarch.
C) Eclipso.
D) The Anti-Monitor.

24. Which team includes a former exotic dancer in its membership?
A) New Warriors
B) WildC.A.T.s
C) Team Titans
D) H.A.R.D. Corps

25. Batman recently let which villain die?
A) Film Freak
B) Killer Croc
C) Abattoir
D) Tim Burton (hey...maybe now *Batman III* won't suck!) ☆

stupid *but* TRUE...

Despite my painstaking research, I can't find any evidence that DC ever acquired the rights to Spider-Man. I figured that had to be the case; how else can you explain...the Spider-Mobile? Spidey, the world's most down-to-Earth superhero, in a wall-climbing, web-shooting Spider-Mobile? Certainly smells like vintage DC nonsense to me, but that's not the case. No sir. Back in the '70s (which, come to think of it, might explain this), Spidey agreed to promote Carter & Lombard, a car manufacturer, by helping design the Spider-Mobile. It didn't work out: after the vehicle was lost in battle, Spidey had to fight the mighty Spider-Mobile, which had been reprogrammed by the nefarious Tinkerer (this just keeps getting worse). Ultimately, Spidey won the day, captured the Tinkerer, destroyed the Spider-Mobile, and that was that.

SPIDER-MOBILE [YIKES...SOMEBODY CALL MIDAS!] TM & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

A	N	S	W	E	R	S
1) A	2) C	3) A	4) B	5) B	6) B	7) B	8) C	9) B
10) A	11) B	12) D	13) C	14) A	15) D	16) C	17) B	18) D
19) B	20) A	21) C	22) D	23) C	24) B	25) C

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the Wizard of Cards

By Stephen Shamus

The Mighty Morphins Return

Mighty Morphin Power Rangers series 2 is on the way from Collect-A-Card in June. You might remember that series 1 came out a few months back and sold out rather quickly thanks to the popularity of the show and quality of the cards. This set is once again comprised of 72 cards. There's also an etched-foil version of all 72 cards, one of which comes in every pack. Direct market and mass market versions of this series are being produced; the former will feature different border colors (which haven't been determined) and lenticular and gold-foil cards.

Each of the twelve lenticular cards will come once every 18 packs; these cards, which feature the same technology as Sportflics cards, will show the teenage protagonists when held at one angle and their heroic "Morphin" alter egos when held at another. Gold-foil stamped cards spotlighting Red, Blue, Yellow, Pink, and Black Power Rangers come one in every 72 packs. The direct set is limited to 5,000 cases, and the retail set will also have a short run. Cards will come eight per 99-cent pack, including one etched-foil card.

If you haven't had enough of single superhero sets this year, get ready for a biggie from SkyBox. Later this year (probably November), look for the Superman Man of Steel Platinum series. These oversized two-and-a-half-by-five-inch cards are the same size as SkyBox's Sandman set, released earlier this year. All the Supercards will have silver-foil borders like the chase cards from the Sandman set. There will be randomly inserted certificates that consumers can redeem for actual steel versions of the cards. We'll have more info next month, Superfans.

SkyBox has some other cool sets on the horizon. In October, we'll see the SkyBox Master Series: Creator's Edition, a 90-card creator-owned set featuring five artists—Brom, Julie Bell, Dave Dorman, Dave McKean, and Brian Stelfreeze—and 21 brand-new characters. Each pack has six cards for $1.49, like all master series. Each artist's most impressive painting has been made into a Spectra-Etch card. Cards from this bonus five-card subset come two per box, so people should go wild trying to get their hands on 'em.

Comic Images has a pair of artist sets on tap for August. The Best of Olivia All-Chromium set features more paintings of beautiful women by the megatalented Olivia. The suggested retail price runs between $1.75 and $2.00 per seven-card pack. Six chase cards utilizing an Omnichrome process, which is an iridescent, opulent chromium process that gives the chromium a see-through effect, will come packed three per 36-pack box. Three different Ladies in Red cards featuring women in red (naturally) come packed at one of each per case. A medallion card is also inserted once per case. Olivia has signed 500 cards (no odds are available on these).

Next up is Comic Images's Firebrands: Heroines of Science Fiction set, also a 90-card collection, which features such heroines as Galadriel and Eowyn (*Lord of the Rings*), Andromeda (*Andromeda*), and Iskra (*The Dark Tower*). These will come 10 cards to a pack, which will sell for between $1.00 and $1.50. The set was done completely by Ron Miller, who has released a few books of his paintings of these characters in the past.

The Kenner Legends of Batman toys due out later this year will come with exclusive trading cards from SkyBox. Future Batman, Crusader Batman, and the six other figures will be packaged with a card featuring a painting of that toy. Rick Burchett will pencil and ink these cards.

The Magic: The Gathering cards from Wizards of the Coast (no relation to us) have been the sleeper cards of the year. Among the hottest to hit the non-sports card industry in some time, these 302 numbered cards actually comprise a popular game. Magic: The Gathering was first released in a 297-card Alpha Edition over a year ago. Since then, more sets have been manufactured to clarify and add to the original cards: a Beta Edition led to an Unlimited Edition and then the Revised Edition, the current incarnation, which contains about two dozen more cards, including some from the out-of-print Arabian Nights subset.

The first item you need to play the game is the standard 60-card starter deck. In order to strengthen your lineup, you have to buy booster packs. Cards are broken down into three

™ & © DC Comics

™ & © DC Comics

The Knightquest Batman and Joker cards, two of several cards packaged in the new Kenner line of toys.

© Garfield Games Inc.

Magic: The Gathering mixes trading card collectability with game playing excitement.

gories: common, uncommon, and rare. In a standard 15-card booster pack, you get one rare card and three uncommon cards; the rest are common. Some cards within a series, however, are worth more than others, just like a Wolverine card is worth more than a Polaris card from the same set. Collectors have been buying pack after pack looking for these more valuable cards.

In the game itself, each player starts off with 20 life points, which can be taken away by an opponent's spell or creature cards. The game ends when all players but one have run out of life points.

Packs of Magic are now selling for between $2.50 and $3. Since the initial set's release, 100-card update sets have been released to add different twists and spells to the game. Later this year, Wizards of the Coast will issue playable *Star Trek* cards. We'll have more info as the release date approaches.

SkyBox made a big mistake with the Simpsons trading cards—it didn't print enough! The few packs that can be found are selling for between $1.25 and $1.75 each. People have started to find the Art de Bart redemption cards, each of which may be returned for an original piece of Simpsons art by Matt Groening himself. These original pieces look awesome; Groening has definitely gone all out on this one. The fact that there's only 400 of the redemption cards makes them nearly impossible to pull.

Another product that's selling well is the DC Sandman card set, which was somewhat underordered by retailers. The silver-foil chase cards depicting various members of the Endless are selling extremely well. Followers of Morpheus, Death, Desire, et al. are very pleased with this well-produced set.

Two Lion King card sets will be pouncing into stores this June courtesy of SkyBox. A 90-card foil set based on the animated Disney film released in June will be the company's first UV-coated Disney set. The cards will feature gallery-quality art from the movie, and several will spotlight the main characters. Lucky collectors will find nine holographic foil cards, a five-card subset of SkyBox's first pop-up cards, and lenticular hologram cards, which feature 3-D images that change as the card is moved. Eight-card packs will run 99 cents a pop.

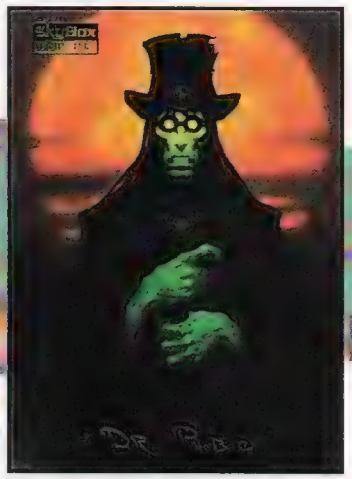
SkyBox will also release Lion King hobby sets featuring 50 oversized foil-stamped cards in an individually numbered collector's tin. These 50 cards will be manufactured via waterless printing, which makes for awesome-looking cards! These sets should be extremely popular.

Alas, poor card products, we knew you well. Two card sets were recently canceled, SkyBox's Batman: The Archive Collection series and Pyramid/Upper Deck's Valiant Files: Secrets From the Harbinger Foundation. SkyBox's Batman set, which was to cover every single thing you ever needed or wanted to know about Batman, and was to reprint comic book covers, cels from the animated series, and movie images, fell prey to complications the company faced while trying to secure the rights to various Batman licenses. This problem prevented the company from releasing the set by the planned September ship date, but it's possible the set will be produced at a later time.

The Valiant Files cards that were due out in May were canceled because of low orders. Much of the artwork scheduled for the set will appear in future Valiant sets.

A taste of *The Lion King* holographic foil cards.

Two prismatic Galaxy cards from the Firebrands: Heroines of Science Fiction set.



A preview of the Master Series: Creator's Edition card set.

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TOP 10 HEROES & VILLAINS OF THE MONTH

This list doesn't track the number of copies which a specific character sells each month. It doesn't pay any attention to any kind of sales meter. This list is a roster of the 10 comic book characters with the strongest fan following—nothing more, nothing less.

1. SPAWN

[illegible]

2. SPIDER-MAN

[illegible]

3. BATMAN

[illegible]

4. SUPERMAN

[illegible]

Spawn is a registered trademark of Todd McFarlane Productions Inc. Spawn © Todd McFarlane. Spider-Man™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group. Batman and Superman™ & © DC Comics.

5. WOLVERINE

OK, let's see if we can't clear up this whole Wolverine origin mystery. Simply judging from what we see in this picture, Wolvie's not Canadian, he's not Japanese (that's a toughie), he's... Italian! Hey, just look at all that hair! Geez, you'd have to shave this guy with a rider-mower. Not that this has anything to do with anything, but we gotta fill this space somehow. Aside from his 107 different action figure variations and his weekly exposure on the X-Men cartoon show, Logan's recent trials and tribulations in *X-Men* and his own title have made for some of the most entertaining Wolverine stories in quite a while.

6. GAMBIT

Hmmm...Richard Grieco as Gambit in a live-action X-Men movie. Nah, he couldn't do the accent. Even though he's a lookalike for the former star of *21 Jump Street* and *Booker*, Gambit here has become one of Marvel's more popular characters. Being a mutant X-Man helps (weird...being a mutant makes you popular?), but he's a pretty cool character nonetheless. His ability to charge objects with explosive power, his awesome agility and fighting style, and the fact that he's making time with Rogue has won the admiration of all his male fans, while everything listed above plus his looks minus the Rogue thing keeps his female fan base growing.

7. PROPHET

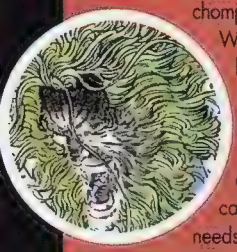
We've narrowed it down to three reasons why Prophet here could be so upset. First, he's bald and has a tube plugged into his head. Unless you're a Borg, that's not a happening thing. Second, he has no pupils, making it really tough for him to read books like *Spawn/Batman*, *Archer & Armstrong*, *Secret Defend*...actually, that "gift horse" maxim comes to mind here. And finally, he's completely misproportioned. That's gotta stink. You can only buy clothes from Andre the Giant's widow, the nine-piece Chicken McNuggets isn't enough and the 20-piece is too much, and the urinals are so darn low. I'd be upset too.

8. PRIME

Hey, a rock star in *Wizard*'s Top 10 Heroes & Villains! Who is he, the lead singer for Soundgarden? Alice in Chains? Pearl Jam? Uh uh. It's that studly 13-year-old with an attitude, Kevin Green, best known for his protoplasmic Prime persona. The childlike hero with a flowing red cape and yellow wrist bracers recently had a run-in with the macho Ultrahero Firearm, who made Kevin rethink his idea of a manly hero. Hence the chain-toting, safety-pin-earringed, spiked-headband bad boy called Rogue Prime. Two of the only things that remained constant in his book were the storytelling and the art. *Prime* is still one of the best comics on the market today!

9. SABRETOOTH

Since Sabretooth is rapidly losing momentum on the hot character charts, we're not sure what he thinks is so funny. I mean, c'mon, the 'tooth here was built up to be the next Wolverine, and fans were chomping at the bit to get into this maniacal, prewimpy-Wolverine-like character. However, his storyline—he's being kept prisoner in the X-Mansion in an attempt to rehabilitate him—was recently kinda pushed to the sidelines. Even though he's heavily featured in the Toy Biz line of X-Men toys and in multiple episodes of the red-hot X-Men cartoon, his presence in Marvel's comics really needs to be beefed up.



10. VAMPIRELLA

What the...?!? Vampirella? Vampirella made it into the Top 10? Awesome! Aside from giving us a new character to write about (*you* try writing about Spawn for six months in a row), a pretty face like hers is always a welcome sight. Hot bad girls are newly popular in comics (if you don't believe me, check out back issues of *Vampirella*, *Lady Death*, and *Shi*. *¡Mucho caliente!*), and Vampirella leads the pack, probably because her costume is smaller then all the other bad girls' nonsuits. Thanks to that and her new *Vengeance of Vampirella* series, another scorching book, Vampi looks set to remain a hot commodity for quite some time.

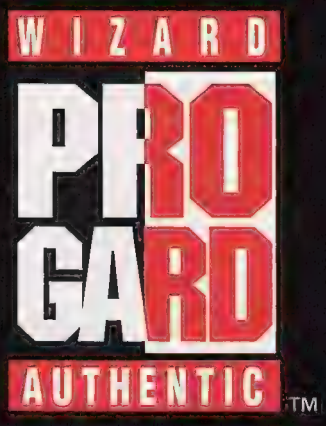
MORT OF THE MONTH

Now it's time to look at the lamest character of the month, or, as we like to call 'em, the Mort of the Month!

COMPOSITE SUPERMAN

Wouldja lookie-lookie here! He's Superman, he's Batman, he's a floor wax, he's a dessert topping! He's the Composite Superman! Yes sir, once again we've reached into the pre-*Crisis* DC pit and pulled out another bag of swill with legs. Though not quite as lousy as past morts, the Composite Superman definitely deserves to be a Mort of the Month. Y'see, Joe Meach, the janitor at the Superman Museum (?), was cleaning the area in front of the Legion of Super-Heroes display when a bolt of lightning hit the statues and Meach, somehow granting him all the powers of the Legion (every single lousy member). So after this janitor got the power, he did what I'd do: he went out to kick Superman and Batman's butts. He did a fair job of it, too, but the powers faded and he turned back into a janitor. (He later regained the powers thanks to a meddling alien but died in that second outing. Shame, huh?)

Wolverine, Gambit, and Sabretooth ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group. Prophet ™ & © Rob Liefeld Inc. Prime ™ & © Malibu Comics Entertainment Inc. Vampirella ™ & © Harris Publications Inc. The Composite Superman ™ & © DC Comics.



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Amazing Spider-Man #149

Artist: *Ross Andru*
Writer: *Gerry Conway*
Publisher: *Marvel Comics*
Release date: *October 1975*

Wow, things just can't get any stupider than this. To acclimate yourself to the extreme depths of absurdity reached in this issue, go read the Stupid but True... on page 111 if you haven't already done so. It'll make this pill go down more smoothly. Go ahead, we'll wait. Hmm-hmm.....

Ah, you're back. Knowing that Marvel was silly enough to give Spidey a Spider-Mobile should make the fact that this issue also featured a Spider-Man clone a little easier to accept.

"Spider-Man clone?" you say. See, Spidey's college biology teacher, Miles Warren, aka the Jackal, cloned Spidey. (Neat trick for a biology teacher.) The two Spideys, each of whom believed himself to be the genuine article, battled it out. During the slugfest, one died...maybe.

It's never been made 100-percent clear which Spider-Man might have bit the big one. From the looks of it, there's about to be two Spideys in the Marvel Universe. One first appeared in *Amazing Fantasy* #15, currently valued at $17,500; the other, right here in *Amazing Spider-Man* #149, valued at $16. This could be the biggest Comic Watch sleeper book of all time.

Value then: $1.75
Value now: $3.00

One year ago this month, the *Wizard* Comic Watch spotlighted *Superman: The Man of Steel* (series) #1, the first full appearance of the Eradicator.

© DC Comics

© Brian Pulido

Evil Ernie (vol. 1) #1

Artist: *Steven Hughes*
Writer: *Brian Pulido*
Publisher: *Eternity*
Release date: *December 1991*

It looks like Evil Ernie is doing his impression of a fanboy who just shelled out five bucks to read a copy of *Batman/Spawn* (i.e., an unhappy camper). Anyways, this low-profile book (only 12,400 printed!) is startin' to smoke in the back issue bins for two reasons.

First off, it's the first appearance and origin of title character Evil Ernie. While that's of only mediocre importance, a hot babe by the name of Lady Death is also introduced in this issue. Yup, the same Lady Death who recently starred in the scorching-hot three-issue *Lady Death* mini-series. (You must have seen it. A tall blonde woman doing a Dolly Parton impression in undersized black underwear? Chromium cover? It's hard to miss.)

The current popularity of bad girl comics coupled with the fact that this issue's print run was next to zero makes for one sizzlin'-hot back issue ripe for the pickin'—if you can find it!

Value then: $8.00
Value now: $10.00

One year ago this month, the *Wizard* Comic Watch spotlighted *Megaton* #1, the first appearance of Vanguard.

© Gary S. Carlson

PICKS
FROM THE WIZARD'S HAT

HERE'S A LISTING OF THE HOTTEST BOOKS SHIPPING IN JULY!

Zero Hour #4-#0

Artists: Dan Jurgens & Jerry Ordway
Writer: Dan Jurgens
Release Date: July & August
Cover Price: $1.50 each

If you're a longtime comics fan, you already know what *Crisis on Infinite Earths* did in terms of unscrambling DC's timeline mess. It also created a whole batch of new problems that had to be dealt with. With that in mind, DC has produced a sequel to *Crisis*: the much-awaited *Zero Hour: Crisis in Time*. (That title's so ominous that our collective sphincters tighten just hearing it.)

In *Zero Hour*, you'll witness the death and rebirth of the DC Universe. According to *Zero Hour* writer/penciler Dan Jurgens, "Initially, we'll see Batgirl, [once paralyzed,] running around. Then we'll see a multitude of Hawkmen flying around that we've never seen before. From there we'll realize that something is wrong.... Time has never been truly settled since *Crisis*. There are energy and time anomalies causing other timelines to merge with our own. This is *Zero Hour*."

Throughout this epic five-part mini-series, we'll be treated to such events as the death of the Flash (again?!), the final fate of the Justice Society (again?!?), and, in the monumental issue #0, the end of everything (*again?!?*). To help alleviate further continuity confusion, issue #0 will also have a six-page fold-out chart depicting the entire reconstituted DC timeline so you can figure out where every character fits in the larger scheme of things.

Jurgens says of *Zero Hour*, "It's meant to give a better sense of how all the characters relate to one another after 55 years of the DC Universe." Makes perfect sense to us.

All characters depicted ™ & © DC Comics

WetWorks #1

WetWorks ™ & © Aegis Entertainment Inc. DBA Widestorm Productions

Artists: Whilce Portacio & Scott Williams
Writers: Whilce Portacio & Brandon Choi
Release Date: July 5
Cover Price: $1.95

As most of you dedicated *Wizard* readers know, *WetWorks* was originally set to premiere in October 1992 as the last of the original seven Image titles. Due to some unfortunate and unforeseen circumstances in the life of series artist and creator Whilce Portacio, *WetWorks* was put on indefinite hiatus—until now.

WetWorks is the remains of Team 7, the covert government squad that counted Deathblow, Grifter, Backlash, and Dane among its members. The name "WetWorks" comes from the term for a killing done in close quarters that wets the killer with his victim's blood. Needless to say, those of you readers out there who are adverse to violence may want to shy away from this one and stick to your daily regimen of *Barbie Fashion* and *Archie's Pals & Gals*.

In the kickoff issue of this mini-series, the covert team is sent on a mission to Europe to stop some civil unrest. While there, they run into the bloodsucking legion known as the Vampire Nation. During the course of the mini-series, the team will acquire symbiotic golden armor (sorta like a gold-plated Venom or Carnage), which will heighten their power. In fact, it should make 'em formidable enough to tangle with the WildC.A.T.s, a battle we'll see in the future of this overdue but not-to-be-overlooked title.

Brute & Babe: "...it begins..." Monument Set 1

Artists: Bart Sears & Andy Smith
Writer: Bart Sears
Release Date: July
Cover Price: $3.95

Fresh from the pages of Bart Sears's Brutes & Babes column—found in this here comic magazine!—comes *Brute and Babe: "...it begins...,"* the initial offering from Sears's new Ominous Press. The story features Brute (aka Mael) searching for the woman who "shares his destiny," Sears says. Of course, that woman is Babe (no, not the John Byrne character; we wrote about her on page 59). The book consists of 16 pages of comic story plus an eight-page Ominous preview that'll give all you fans the low-down on what titles and characters to expect from Bart's new company.

Brute & Babe will come your way as a special monument or tablet set instead of the regular stapled-pages format. What in tarnation is a monument set? Well, the cover is essentially a folder that contains 16 two-sided unstapled pages. The entire package ships in a clear plastic case for maximum effect.

When asked about this format, Sears replies, "For Ominous, the tablet format will be used for our high-end releases, only for our most important and worthy stories that deserve special attention." He adds, "We look at a tablet as being an image that is cast in stone, something more permanent that a fan can have forever." Join Bart and the rest of the Ominous crew for the first of what he calls "relentlessly powerful comics."

Brute & Babe ™ & © Bart Sears

Fantastic Four #392

Fantastic Four™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Artists: Paul Ryan & Dan Bulanadi
Writer: Tom DeFalco
Release Date: July 26
Cover Price: $1.50

Just about a year ago, there were a slew of rumors swirling around like a dead goldfish in a toilet about the demise of the Fantastic Four and the creation of a new team, the Fantastic Force. The mighty powers that be at Marvel (read: Editor-in-Chief Tom DeFalco) said pee-shaw, there's no such thing.

Well, maybe the idea kinda sounded cool to Marvel anyway, because in this issue you lucky readers get treated to the first appearance of the Fantastic Force and the end of the Fantastic Four. In this, the epic conclusion to the "Nobody Gets Out Alive" storyline, we'll find out the identity of the deadly Dark Raider...Sue Richards and her problem child Franklin will go to battle as allies for the first time...Sue will decide to track down Reed Richards one way or another and go off on her merry way...Johnny Storm will decide to quit the team...and Ben Grimm will take off, leaving Ant-Man as the only hero at Four Freedoms Plaza.

According to Ralph Macchio (the FF editor, silly, not the *Karate Kid* guy!), "The team realizes things aren't going as well as they should be, and the Black Panther begins to put together the Fantastic Force." The team consists of Franklin, Myydas (an Inhuman), a Wakandan called Vibraxis (this name's just beggin' for a joke, but we'll refrain), Huntarra, and Kismet. Jeez, this almost makes us wish for the days when the fourth member was She-Hulk, Luke Cage, or even Medusa! But hey, this issue should be pretty interesting!

Uncanny X-Men #316

Artist: Joe Madureira
Writer: Scott Lobdell
Release Date: July 5
Cover Price: $1.50 (Newsstand Ed.)
$2.95 (Collector's Ed.)

There's a whole lotta stuff brewing in the mutant camp this summer, and it all centers around the deadly deeds perpetrated by those technobaddies, the Phalanx. The Phalanx have been trying to kill the X-Men for quite some time now (since *Uncanny X-Men* #311), and it seems like they may just have the juice to pull it off!

That's the gist of the massive storyline called "Phalanx Covenant." It encompasses three separate crossover stories, the first of which, "Generation Next," begins in this book. The other two crossovers, "Life Signs" and "Final Sanction," depict different aspects of war against the Phalanx.

In the course of "Generation Next," most of the X-Men are kidnapped by the devious Phalanx, leaving it up to Jubilee and Banshee to save a batch of young muties whom the Phalanx have targeted for destruction. Who do they recruit to help them? Two of the X-Men's most deadly adversaries: Sabretooth and the White Queen.

"Generation Next" will continue in the pages of *Uncanny* #317 and *X-Men* #36-#37 before the introduction of the next generation of mutants, Generation X—to be led by Banshee and the White Queen—this fall. *Uncanny* #316 features the fantastic pencils of the fast-rising Joe Madureira. (Marvel, if you're listening, give this guy *Uncanny* full time—he's the goods!)

Uncanny X-Men™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

MORE PICKS

"Zero Hour" Checklist

SHIPPING

JULY 12, 1994

Zero Hour #4
Batman #511
Flash #94
Legionnaires #18
Superboy #8
Superman: The Man of Steel #37
Valor #23

JULY 19

Zero Hour #3
Batman: Shadow of the Bat #31
Green Lantern #55
Hawkman #13
Justice League America #92
Superman #93

JULY 26

Zero Hour #2
Adventures of Superman #516
Detective Comics #678
Justice League Task Force #16
L.E.G.I.O.N. '94 #70
Outsiders #11
Steel #8
Team Titans #24

AUGUST 2

Zero Hour #1
Action Comics #703
Anima #7
Catwoman #14
Damage #6
Darkstars #24
Green Arrow #90
Guy Gardner: Warrior #24
Justice League International #68
Legion of Super-Heroes #61
Robin #10
Showcase '94 #10

AUGUST 9

Zero Hour #0

The following pages list the grooviest titles shipping in July. Books marked by the *Wizard* Recommended Reading sign promise to deliver solid, well-written stories. Comics marked by the *Wizard* Junior Picks sign should be excellent reads for youngsters. Don't overlook these books on the comic rack!

Action Comics #703

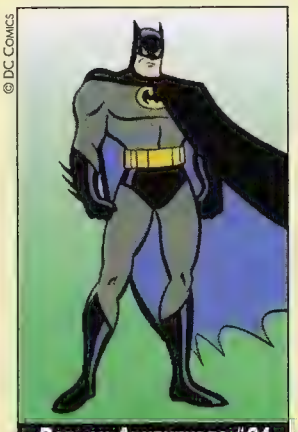
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. The doody really hits the fan as Metropolis completely blinks out of existence. Talk about a bad day at the office! By David Michelinie, Jackson Guice, and Denis Rodier. **$1.50**

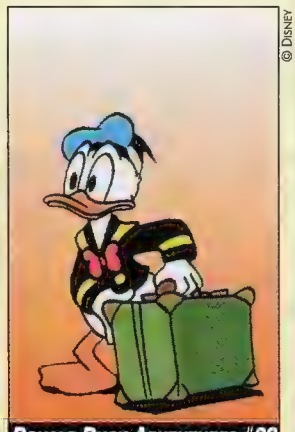
Action Comics Annual #6

DC COMICS John Byrne writing and drawing Superman? Is this a "Zero Hour" crossover or something? Well, no...it's an "Elseworlds" story. Mr. Byrne has young Kal-El crash in 18th century England. When he grows up, he radically alters the events of the American Revolution, creating a very different 20th century America. How different? Well, read the book and find out fer yerself. Besides, it's by that Byrne guy, so it should be a decent read. **$2.95**

© Archie Comics
Archie #428

© John Byrne
Babe #1


© DC Comics
Batman Adventures #24


© Disney
Donald Duck Adventures #28

Adventures of Superman #516

DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. In the aftermath of the Smallville crisis (pretty clever how we fit "crisis" in there, eh?), Superman returns to an altered Metropolis, where he's been retroactively replaced as the city's greatest hero by...Alpha Centurion? And just who has Lois been smooching? These pressing issues will be addressed by Karl Kesel, Barry Kitson, and Ray McCarthy. **$1.50**

Archie #428

ARCHIE Veronica believes she has Archie all to herself at the beach...until Betty gets a job working at the beach's concession stand. Also: is Veronica staying faithful? Archie goes undercover to find out. **$1.50**

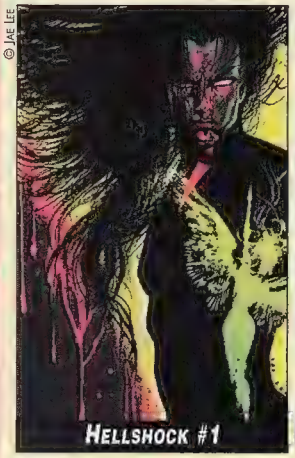
Babe #1

LEGEND/DARK HORSE Hey, look! Another John Byrne book. (Sheesh, the guy's all over the place!) She's incredibly strong, nothing hurts her, she can breathe underwater, and she can make funny animals out of balloons...but she doesn't know who she is, where she came from, or why she was found on a highway without any clothes on! She's Babe and she's...well, a babe. She meets up with a Hollywood agent who wants to make her famous and get her out of his hair! Light-hearted fun from writer/artist/letterer/card shark John Byrne, who, when asked if Babe will have green skin, answers: "It's *not* She-Hulk!" **$2.50**

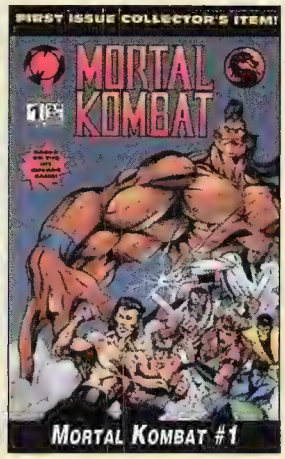
Barbie Fashion #45

MARVEL Ken and Barbie go out to catch some rays while Skipper studies Roman history and learns that honesty is always the best policy (and that ain't no lie). **$1.50**

MORE PICKS



Hellshock #1



Mortal Kombat #1

Batman #511
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. When "Zero Hour" calls for Batman, Barbara Gordon—Batgirl—answers the phone. Not only is she no longer crippled, she has no memory of ever being so! Worse than that, there's the Barbara Gordon who *is* crippled to contend with. Who's the real McCoy? We dunno; read the book! By Doug Moench and Mike Manley. **$1.50**

Batman Adventures #24
DC COMICS Has Kyodi Ken returned from the grave??? Well, he or someone exactly like him is prowling the streets of Gotham, and Batman is keen to find out why. **$1.50**

Batman: Shadow of the Bat #31
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. Alfred Pennyworth, the trusty...detective? Yes, this "other" Alfred is more of a bother than he usually is to Batman: he gets in the way when Batman tries to stop a gang of killers. (I thought "Zero Hour" was supposed to get rid of crap like this.) By Alan Grant and Bret Blevins. **$1.95**

Bone #15
CARTOON BOOKS Fone Bone and Thorn return to the farm, while Smiley and Phoney continue to pay off their debt by washin' dishes at the tavern. Starting in this issue, learn Phoney's connection to the Rat Creatures! Written and drawn by Jeff Smith, who says, "The title of the story is 'Double or Nothing'... Back in the bar, Lucius and Phoney Bone make a little bet, double or nothing. Phoney bets that he can get people to give him money for nothing, and Lucius takes him up on it. If Phoney wins, he's free from washing dishes for the rest of his life; if not...well, it would be bad." **$2.95**

Detective Comics #678
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. The events of "Zero Hour" unexpectedly grant Bruce Wayne his ultimate wish: a world where his parents were never gunned down by Joe Chill. But will Batman try to fix this anomaly—or leave the world the way he's always wanted it to be? By Chuck Dixon, Graham Nolan, and Scott Hanna. **$1.50**

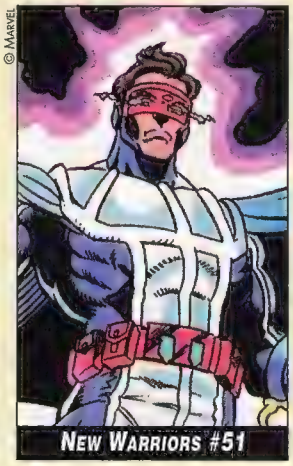
Donald Duck Adventures #28
GLADSTONE Meet the "Sheriff of Bullet Valley" and "The Pirates of Ashcanistran." This baby has a scorchin' cover painted by legendary Donald Duck artist Carl Barks. **$2.95**

Doom's IV #1
IMAGE The book that Steven Spielberg demanded! They're Doom's IV: Grimm, Burn, Slyder, and Brick. They fight against the maniacal Doom Corp. To see why, check out this book. (And remember: Spielberg optioned this stuff for a future movie...see it here for the first time.) By Rob Liefeld and Mark Pacella. **$2.50**

Green Lantern #55
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. Amidst the carnage that has been in his life of late, Kyle Rayner learns how to recharge his GL ring and whether or not it has a fail-safe against killing. Rayner is also recruited by Superman and Metron to help fight the zaniness that's happening to their world. Meanwhile, the Golden Age GL (ugh! another aspect that "Zero Hour" was supposed to get rid of...) tells Kyle the truth about his predecessor Hal Jordan. By Ron Marz, Derek Aucoin, Darryl Banks, and Romeo Tanghal. **$1.50**

Hanna-Barbera All-Stars #2
HARVEY A mix of stories this month featuring Yogi Bear; Dino, Fred, and Barney; and Magilla Gorilla (who's for sale, by the way). **$1.50**

Hellshock #1
IMAGE This light-hearted tale of madness, violence, and obsession introduces Hellshock, a guy born of mortal mother and supernatural (and unknown) father. But can he make the ultimate sacrifice by saving another? Beats the hell outta us. Yep, it's your all-American tale of good and evil by writer/artist/midwife Jae Lee. **$1.95**



New Warriors #51

The Ray #5

todd McFARLANE®

SPAWN

ALMOST MONTHLY FROM IMAGE COMICS™

MORE PICKS

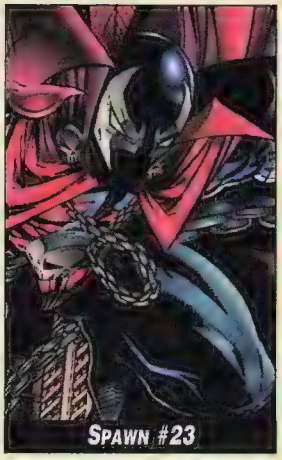
JETSONS #3
HARVEY This issue's story: the Jetsons take a vacation to Journeyback Park, where dinosaurs once again roam the earth. **$1.50**

MARS ATTACKS #3
TOPPS Despite his wounds and his case of the hiccups, National Guardsman Bridges single-handedly takes on the Martian Death Squads that are destroying his town. Meanwhile, the Martian commander must deal with the only Earth weapons that can demolish his forces: nuclear submarines. By Keith Giffen and Charles Adlard. **$2.95**

MORTAL KOMBAT #1
MALIBU The scorchin'-hot video game is now a scorchin'-hot Malibu comic! Join Sonya Blade, Kano, Raiden, Liu Kang, Scorpion, Sub-Zero, and Johnny Cage as fate (and creators Charles Marshall, Patrick Rolo, and Bobby Rae) brings them together for a mysterious tournament on an equally mysterious island. Each races after a magical book, and the winner gets to face Goro, the half-man, half-dragon guy. **$2.95**

NEW WARRIORS #51
MARVEL Soooo...what exactly do you do with 14 New Warriors? Well, you could go the current Marvel way and create about a dozen spinoff books. Or you could just do it the old-fashioned Marvel way and give some members a reason to leave. This issue opts for the latter. A great jumping-on point for new readers, who can witness the making of an all-new team! By Fabian Nicieza, Richard Pace, and Larry Mahlstedt. **$1.50**

PRIME #14
MALIBU Fed up with acting like a "responsible adult" and being ravaged by the press, Prime alienates the world even more when he tells the gangs of Los Angeles to stand up and fight for their rights. (Is this guy nuts or what?) Also, this issue introduces a new villain: the Voodoo Master, heir to the crime empire of the Monkey Woman (from *Solitaire*). By Gerard Jones, Len Strazewski, and Darick Robertson. Strazewski says, "Basically, the Kevin Green inside of Prime is starting to get fed up with the way adults treat teenagers. And there's a Prime scandal..." **$1.95**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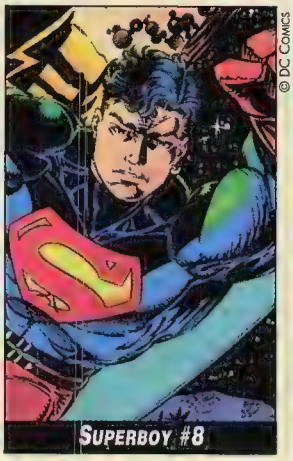
SPAWN #23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SUPERBOY #8

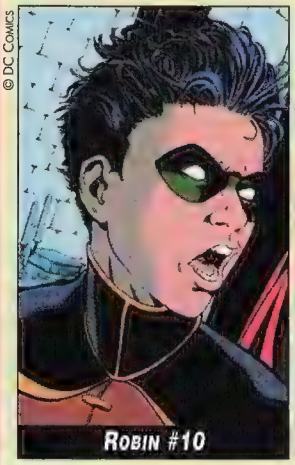
THE RAY #5
DC COMICS It's father vs. son when the original Ray decides to punish Ray Jr. by taking back his powers because Jr. mishandled the crisis that almost destroyed Philadelphia. Talk about a fanny slappin'! By Christopher Priest, Howard Porter, and Robert Jones. **$1.95**

ROBIN #10
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. Robin meets...Robin? That's right: Tim Drake meets up with a 13-year-old Dick Grayson in Robin garb. Both team up to stop the Weasel, who's a master thief. By Chuck Dixon, Tom Grummett, and Ray Kryssing. **$1.50**

SANDMAN #63
VERTIGO/DC Not a "Zero Hour" crossover. Actually, this book is still smack dab in the middle of the humongo "The Kindly Ones" storyline that, rumors have it, will end up with Sandman dying or being caned in Singapore for keying some new cars. Which will it turn out to be? Only Neil Gaiman, Marc Hempel, and D'Israeli know for sure. **$1.95**

SAVAGE DRAGON #12
IMAGE A mysterious green-skinned woman from the Dragon's past appears (She-Hulk?). Does she know anything about his mysterious past? Also: a new SuperPatriot is introduced, but who is he and where the heck is he from? By Erik Larsen, who creates too many darn characters for his own good (he only winds up killing them off anyway). **$1.95**

SHOWCASE '94 #10
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. Learn what happens to Azrael in "Azrael: Aftermath," which leads into the forthcoming *Azrael* ongoing series. Also, a special "Zero Hour" tie-in story wherein Clock King, Chronos, Calendar Man, and Time Commander (all tied for crappiest names in existence, by the way) learn how screwed up the concept of time in the DC Universe has become. By a motherlode of various creators. **$1.95**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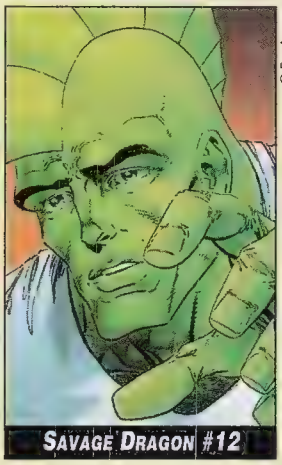
ROBIN #10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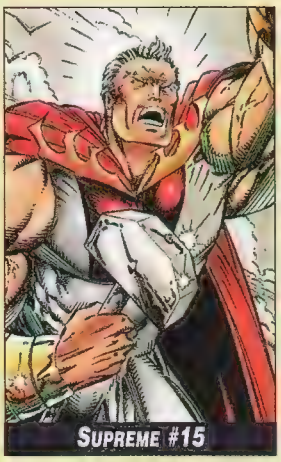
SAVAGE DRAGON #12

MORE PICKS



© Rob Liefeld

© Todd McFarlane

Spawn #23
IMAGE Spawn is being hunted by the police, CIA, FBI, and YMCA. (Spawny was hangin' around the locker room too much.) Who will reach him first? (Our bet's on the YMCA, 'cause they don't eat as many donuts and they've got the Village People on their side.) Plus: someone figures out Spawn's true identity. By Todd McFarlane. **$1.95**

The Spectre #22
DC COMICS "The Spear of Destiny" storyline reaches its stunning climax this issue as Superman arrives to halt the Spectre's rampage. Y'see, Supes has the Spear of Destiny—the only weapon that can stop the Spectre—and he has a presidential order from Bubba Clinton to contain Specky or destroy him. By John Ostrander and Tom Mandrake, with a painted cover by Alex (*Marvels*) Ross. Ostrander, who now owns this beautiful piece of cover art, hints: "Basically, it's Superman vs. the Spectre. But don't put your money on the Spectre..." **$1.95**

Superboy #8
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. Recuperating from last issue's "Worlds Collide" shenanigans, Superboy comes face to face with "Zero Hour" when he visits Smallville and meets another Superboy. Needless to say, a brawl ensues, and you can bet it'll be a good time. (For the readers, that is.) By Karl Kesel, Tom Grummett, and Doug Hazlewood. Kesel loves the situation: "Y'know, thank god for 'Zero Hour' or this never would've happened! This is never gonna happen again, kids; it's a once-in-a-lifetime event. It's one of my favorite issues." **$1.50**

Superman #93
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. "Kal-El...meet Jor-El and Lara. Jor-El and Lara...meet Superman." (Well, it goes something like that, I'm sure.) Anyway, Superman's real parents are back and they want to take him home to a Krypton that never really exploded. Y'see, about 30 years ago, the Kryptonians just *thought* their planet might explode. (Reason enough to rocket your kid into space.) By Dan Jurgens with Joe Rubinstein. **$1.50**

Superman: The Man of Steel #37
DC COMICS A "Zero Hour" crossover. For the first time since the "Knightfall" and death of Superman storylines, Batman and Superman meet up and have some tea and chat about the wacky things that've been happening to the DC Universe. Plus, a spaceship lands in Smallville piloted by...Jor-El and Lara, Superman's biological (and very dead) parents!?! By Louise Simonson, Jon Bogdanove, and Dennis Janke. **$1.50**

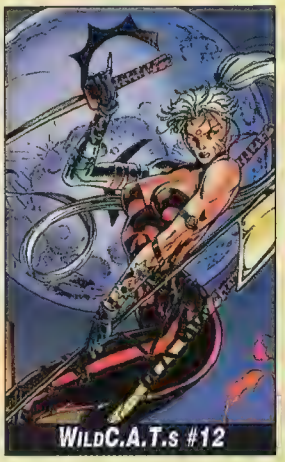
Supreme #15
IMAGE "Supreme Madness," part 4 (of 6). Supreme and Spawn finally come together to do some damage! On some coffee, that is. Spawn becomes Supreme's therapist and listens to his problems. Oh well. That woulda been a cool fight. At least in *Supreme* #16, Supreme pounds StormWatch into hamburger. All this is by Extreme Studios. (Who do they mean by that—"by Extreme Studios"—anyway? Does everyone who works there chip in? The cleaning crew? The receptionists? Those pesky insects that eat the cookie crumbs off the floor? Who exactly?) **$2.50**

Uncle Scrooge #288
GLADSTONE "The Life and Times of Scrooge McDuck," part 4 (of 12). Young Scrooge tries to acquire the infamous Anaconda Copper Mine. **$1.50**

Violator #3
IMAGE The Violator tackles Spawn, and the Vandalizer tackles the Violator. The winner gets pork rinds and Citrus Gatorade. That is, if creators Alan Moore, Greg Capullo, and Mark Pennington don't get to those goodies first... **$1.95**

WildC.A.T.s #12
IMAGE Part 3 of the four-part Huntsman storyline. Zealot and some of her pals team up with the Huntsman to battle Tapestry and the pesky rug pals for the souls of the WildC.A.T.s. By Chris Claremont, Jim Lee, and Scott Williams. **$2.50**

Wolverine #85
MARVEL "Final Sanction," part 1 (of 2). Wolvie, Cyclops, and



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MORE PICKS

Phoenix continue their search for the missing X-Men as they battle the growing forces of the Phalanx. The conclusion, *Cable* #16, ships in August. By Larry Hama and Adam Kubert. **$3.50 (COLLECTOR'S EDITION); $2.50 (NEWSSTAND EDITION)**

X-Factor #106

MARVEL "Life Signs," part 1 (of 3). X-Factor, Excalibur, and X-Force join forces to battle Phalanx as Doug Ramsey returns from the grave. (How original.) Plus, Forge is seduced by the Dark Side of the For...er, Phalanx, I mean. This book ties in with the upcoming *Generation X* book. By Todd DeZango, Jan Duursema, and Al Milgrom. **$2.95 (COLLECTOR'S EDITION); $2.00 (NEWSSTAND EDITION)**

X-Force #38

MARVEL "Life Signs," part 2 (of 3). Rahne and Forge escape the For—er, Phalanx (what kind of word is "phalanx" anyway?) with the help of a formerly deceased Doug Ramsey. But is Doug a greater threat than the Phalanx? By Fabian Nicieza, Tony Daniel, and John Holdredge. **$2.95 (COLLECTOR'S EDITION); $2.00 (NEWSSTAND EDITION)**

X-Men #36

MARVEL "Generation Next," part 2 (of 4). The Phalanx continue their hunt for young mutants around the globe, while the X-Men are still missing. (Geez, I hope Marvel can find their big breadwinners before it's too late! They pay all the bills.) By Fabian Nicieza, Andy Kubert, and Matt Ryan. **$2.95 (COLLECTOR'S EDITION); $1.50 (NEWSSTAND EDITION)**

X-Men Adventures Season II #8

MARVEL "Time Fugitives," part 2 (of 2). Bishop and Cable race against time to halt the growing mutant technovirus now running rampant. And will Wolverine's healing factor have a part in the cure? **$1.25**

Youngblood #7

IMAGE Overtkill (somebody explain that "T" to me) ambushes Badrock (he ambushes the entire town of Badrock?) while he's on vacation. As if that wasn't bad enough, Troll and Graves go at it, and more is revealed about Knight Sabre (no relation to Knight Rider. Speaking of which, did you know that David Hasselhoff has a singing career? He's really big in Egypt or somewhere). Also, Col. Bravo continues to search for Youngblood. By Rob Liefeld with Danny "Minnie and" Miki. **$2.50**

good & cheap

Good-readin' books you can still pick up cheap!

Tales of the Teen Titans #42-#44, Annual #3

Writer: ***Marv Wolfman***
Artists: ***George Pérez, Dick Giordano, and Mike DeCarlo***
Current Total Value: ***$10.50***

Tales of the Teen Titans ™ & © DC Comics

During the early 1980s, some of DC's top-selling books were those starring the New Teen Titans. Marv Wolfman and George Pérez had a lengthy run on the book they had began, and they highlighted it with the tragic four-part "Judas Contract" storyline.

You see, the writer and penciler team had a plan: they would introduce another young teenager to the team in *New Teen Titans* #26 who would join the group in #30. Her name was Terra, and she had the power to control earth and rock and shape it to her will. The character met with tremendous response from the readership.

Unfortunately, Wolfman and Pérez would pull the rug out from under it. From the outset, the creators' intent was to make Terra a traitor who would destroy the Titans from within. With the help of Deathstroke the Terminator, readers witnessed Terra fulfill the "Judas Contract" by dismantling the Titans and giving them to her contractors—the evil organization known as the H.I.V.E.

During this storyline, Dick Grayson—the lone Titan to escape the villains—became Nightwing, and Jericho was introduced. In the end, the heroes triumphed...but at a price, and the Titans would never be quite the same again. ☆

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TOP 100

Here's the list for JUNE... a countdown of the most-ordered titles as reported by Diamond Comic Distributors Inc. (CE=Collector's Edition)

what was hot 1 year ago...

1. Deathmate Prologue (Image)
2. Spawn #14 (Image)
3. Shadowhawk II: The Secret Revealed #2 (Image)
4. Cyberforce #0 (Image)
5. Sabretooth #1 (Marvel)
6. Savage Dragon #1 (Image)
7. Union #1 (Image)
8. Doom's IV #1 (Image)
9. Secret Weapons #1 (Valiant)
10. X-Force #25 (Marvel)

2 years ago...

1. Amazing Spider-Man #365 (Marvel)
2. Spirits of Vengeance #1 (Marvel)
3. X-Men #11 (Marvel)
4. Spawn #2 (Image)
5. Uncanny X-Men #291 (Marvel)
6. X-Force #13 (Marvel)
7. Ghost Rider #28 (Marvel)
8. Savage Dragon #1 (Image)
9. Infinity War #3 (Marvel)
10. Spider-Man #25 (Marvel)

Who's in the tOp100?

	# books in Top 10	# books in Top 50	# books in Top 100
Marvel	4 (+0)	18 (+1)	34 (-5)
Image	3 (+0)	15 (-1)	19 (-3)
DC Comics	2 (-1)	15 (-1)	23 (-1)
Hamilton	1 (+1)	1 (+1)	1 (+1)
Valiant	0 (+0)	1 (+0)	18 (+10)
Bongo	0 (+0)	0 (+0)	2 (+1)
Dark Horse	0 (+0)	0 (+0)	1 (-3)
Harris	0 (+0)	0 (+0)	1 (+1)
Axis	0 (+0)	0 (+0)	1 (+1)

(+ or - indicates change from last month's listings)

1. **X-Men #35 (Marvel)**
2. **Uncanny X-Men #315 (Marvel)**
3. **Violator #2 (Image)**
4. **Wolverine #84 (Marvel)**
5. **Pitt #5 (Image)**
6. **Gen^{13} #5 (Image)**
7. **Mighty Morphin Power Rangers #1 (Hamilton)**
8. **X-Force #37 (Marvel)**
9. **Batman/Punisher: Lake of Fire (DC)**
10. **Batman #510 (DC)**
11. Superman #92 (DC)
12. Cyberforce #6 (Image)
13. Adventures of Superman #515 (DC)
14. Superman: The Man of Steel #36 (DC)
15. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight #63 (DC)
16. X-Men 2099 #11 (Marvel)
17. Action Comics #702 (DC)
18. Detective Comics #677 (DC)
19. X-Factor #105 (Marvel)
20. Adv. of Cyclops & Phoenix #4 (Marvel)
21. Deadpool #1 (Marvel)
22. Youngblood #6 (Image)
23. Marvels #0 (Marvel)
24. Batman: Shadow of the Bat #30 (DC)
25. Amazing Spider-Man #392 (Marvel)
26. Kindred #4 (Image)
27. Beavis & Butt-Head #6 (Marvel)
28. The Chaos Effect Alpha (Valiant)
29. StormWatch #10 (Image)
30. Robin #9 (DC)
31. Venom: Nights of Vengeance #1 (Marvel)
32. Adventures of Superman Annual #6 (DC)
33. Catwoman #13 (DC)
34. Deathblow #6 (Image)
35. Spider-Man #49 (Marvel)
36. Cable #14 (Marvel)
37. Fantastic Four #391 (Marvel)
38. Superboy #7 (DC)
39. Savage Dragon #11 (Image)
40. Supreme #13 (Image)
41. Union #0 (Image)
42. Green Lantern #54 (DC)
43. Codename: Stryke Force #5 (Image)
44. Spider-Man 2099 #22 (Marvel)
45. Incredible Hulk #420 (Marvel)
46. Supreme #14 (Image)
47. Excalibur #80 (Marvel)
48. Brigade #26 (Image)
49. Sandman #63 (DC)
50. Team Youngblood #10 (Image)
51. Ninjak #8 (Valiant)
52. Steel #7 (DC)
53. Superboy Annual #1 (DC)
54. Spectacular Spider-Man #215 (Marvel)
55. Brigade #10 (Image)
56. Web of Spider-Man #115 (Marvel)
57. Newmen #3 (Image)
58. Star Wars: Droids #3 (Dark Horse)
59. The Chaos Effect Omega (Valiant)
60. Force Works #2 (Marvel)
61. Daredevil #331 (Marvel)
62. New Warriors #50 CE (Marvel)
63. Bloodstrike #11 (Image)
64. Judge Dredd #1 (DC)
65. Spider-Man: Web of Doom #1 (Marvel)
66. Robin Annual #3 (DC)
67. X-O Manowar #33 (Valiant)
68. Ghost Rider 2099 #4 (Marvel)
69. Turok, Dinosaur Hunter #16 (Valiant)
70. The Ren & Stimpy Show #21 (Marvel)
71. Bloodshot #20 (Valiant)
72. Lobo: In the Chair #1 (DC)
73. Aquaman #1 (DC)
74. Spider-Man: The Arachnis Project #1 (Marvel)
75. Itchy & Scratchy Comics #3 (Bongo)
76. Psi-Lords #3 (Valiant)
77. Magnus Robot Fighter #41 (Valiant)
78. Radioactive Man #412 (#4) (Bongo)
79. Silver Surfer #95 (Marvel)
80. Blaze #1 (Marvel)
81. Solar, Man of the Atom #38 (Valiant)
82. Archer & Armstrong #26/Eternal Warrior #26 (Valiant)
83. Armorines #5 (Valiant)
84. Spider-Man Unlimited #6 (Marvel)
85. Vengeance of Vampirella #3 (Harris)
86. Rai #26 (Valiant)
87. Avengers #377 (Marvel)
88. Secrets of the Valiant Universe #2 (Valiant)
89. Shadowman #29 (Valiant)
90. The Second Life of Dr. Mirage #11 (Valiant)
91. Black Flag Preview Edition (Image)
92. Harbinger #34 (Valiant)
93. H.A.R.D. Corps #23 (Valiant)
94. Secret Weapons #13 (Valiant)
95. Vamps #1 (DC)
96. Lobo #8 (DC)
97. Shaman's Tears #3 (Axis)
98. The Punisher Meets Archie: When Worlds Collide (Marvel)
99. Captain America #430 (Marvel)
100. X-Men Adventures Season II #7 (Marvel)

TOP 10 JULY 1994

***Wizard*, by staying in touch with hundreds of dealers throughout the country, keeps a close eye on the country's hottest books. Here are the 10 best-selling comics for JULY '94.**

™ & © Rob Liefeld Inc.

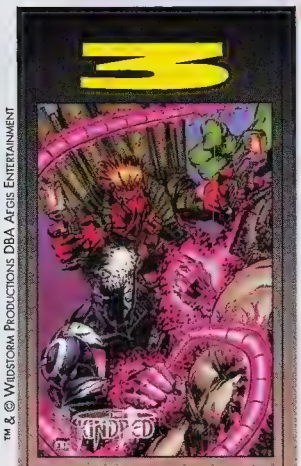
Supreme #12
Artists
S. McManus & C. Nocon
Writers
R. Liefeld & K. Hathaway

Supreme #12?!? Yes, *Supreme* #12 is the *caliente* comic this month, and not because of the death of a major character or the introduction of a new one or even because of a major plot revelation or crossover. This book is hot as a pistol in Drew Barrymore's holster because of the cover artist, Stephen Platt; you fans just can't seem to get enough of this guy. Yes, once again, those wacky Extreme Studios guys gave fans an additional glimpse of Mr. Platt's art and again they caused an immediate sellout on the stands. Maybe this will give more fans a chance to check out what's going on inside the book as well. *Supreme* is one of the better titles put out by Extreme Studios—it's pretty underrated.

™ & © Wildstorm Productions DBA Aegis Entertainment

Deathblow #5A
Artist
Tim Sale
Writers
Brandon Choi & Jim Lee

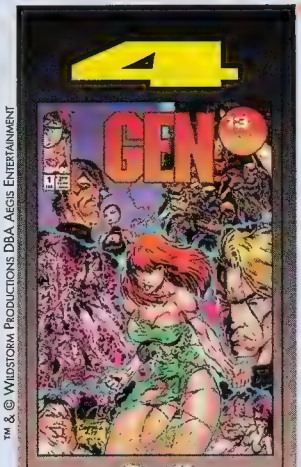
Another one of those alternate cover books from those folks at Image (this time via the Wildstorm contingent), this is one of three alternate cover books to crack the Top 10 this month. We're sitting here in the *Wizard* Top 10 Headquarters readin' comics, eating Twinkies, watching Cindy Crawford workout videos, playing *Mortal Kombat II*, and wondering if this is the start of a trend. Will every publisher looking to call attention to its titles release additional covers? This cover was shipped to retailers to the tune of one for every four copies (that's 25 percent for you non-math types), with the alternate cover featuring artwork by Whilce Portacio as sort of an introduction for new readers to his impressive style of work.



™ & © Wildstorm Productions DBA Aegis Entertainment

Kindred #3A
Artists: B. Booth & S. Regla
Writers: Brandon Choi & Jim Lee

Another one of those alternate cover books from those folks at Image (this time via the Wildstorm contingent), this is one of three alternate cover books to crack the Top 10 this month. We're sitting here in the *Wizard* Top 10 Headquarters readin' comics, eating Twinkies, watching Cindy Crawford workout videos, playing *Mortal Kombat II*, and wondering if this is the start of a trend. Will every publisher looking to call attention to its titles release additional covers? This cover was shipped to retailers to the...y'know, I just got the strangest feeling of *déjà vu*. Anyway, this was shipped to the retailers to the tune of one for every four copies (that's 25 percent for you non-math types), with the alternate cover featuring artwork by Whilce Portacio as sort of an introduction for new readers to his impressive style of work.



™ & © Wildstorm Productions DBA Aegis Entertainment

Gen[13] #1
Artist: J. Scott Campbell
Writer: Brandon Choi

That's right, boys and girls, Image gave us a nice big payoff and we've decided to rename this section the Image Top 10 Comics. *Gen[13]* #1, the first non-"guest cover" book to crack the Top 10 this month, is harder to find than good looks on Whoopi Goldberg. Despite (because of?) an advertising campaign that hit months before the actual book did, retailers came down with amnesia and forgot to order healthy quantities of the title. However, the comic-buying public didn't forget about this title and turned out in droves to obtain copies of it. This caused an immediate sellout as well as immediate secondary market activity, putting this mini-series as a whole into a sales orbit that it doesn't appear it will come out of any time soon.

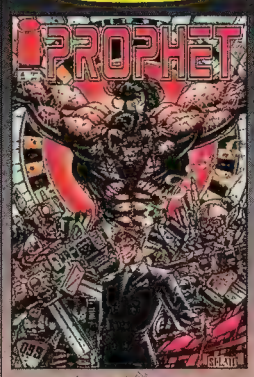
5

™ & © Brian Pulido

Lady Death #1
Artist: Steven Hughes
Writer: Brian Pulido

The first of the bad girls to show her pretty face around the Ol' Top 10 Ranch, *Lady Death* #1 is one tough doggie to rope. What we're trying to say here is that this here book is next to impossible to get a hold of. Up two spots from last month, this book can attribute its staying power to a teensy-weensy print run, a beautiful chromium cover, and the fact that bad girl comics are starting to take the market by storm. Judging by some of the Lady's astronomical anatomical attributes, we'd have to imagine that this title holds a lot more weight in the comic collections of our male readers out there than the female ones (it probably has the exact opposite effect on most female collectors, in fact).

6

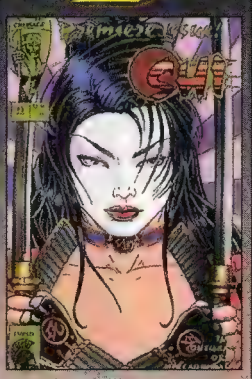


™ & © Rob Liefeld Inc.

Prophet #4A
Artist: Dan Panosian
Writer: Rob Liefeld

Dropping five slots from last month, *Prophet* #4A, the Platt-covered issue that grabbed the industry by its collective privates, has hit a bit of a slump. Though Mr. Platt's art is still selling books like nobody's business, the variant book craze has been kind of milked dry. (Here's a hint to all the variant cover-loving publishers, including us: try something new.) Less than 20 percent of *Prophet* #4's nonmonstrous print run was slapped with a Platt cover, and comic collectors, being a somewhat kooky breed, had to have this version, resulting in comic shops nationwide finding themselves a wee bit short on this bad boy. Proving that he doesn't need gimmicks to be hot, Platt's current unallocated run on *Prophet* is selling strong, with fans gobbling up the stuff.

7

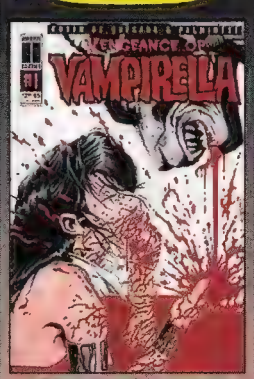


™ & © William Elliott Tucci

Shi #1
Artists: W. Tucci & H. Mercadoocaslo
Writers: W. Tucci & P. Gutierrez

Hey, it's the Crow's mom. Did she think the movie had a crappy ending too? Regardless, Shi here (who's not really the Crow's mom, for all you "sharp as clay" comic fans out there) had an extremely low-ordered premiere issue, with all 50,000-plus copies whisked off the newsstands quicker than a fad losing popularity in comics (believe it, comic fan!). So anyway, *Shi* follows the exploits of Ana Ishikawa, one very hot babe with kick-butt fighting skills that she combines with an ancient Oriental philosophy in her war on evil. With the current trend in comics being scantily clad superheroines bending into all sorts of weird positions, it's no wonder that this book sold like it did. Shi's parading around at the beginning of the book wearing bupkiss certainly turned a few heads.

8



™ & © Harris Publications Inc.

Vengeance of Vampirella #1
Artist: Buzz
Writer: Tom Sniegoski

More scantily clad women! Hot dog, I can't think of a better way to further alienate our female readers than covering these books and sounding like a bunch of sexist slobs in the process. Gareb'll be so proud. Anywho, Vampi here demonstrates that regardless of the Earth's gravitational pull, no costume can ever be too small. Heck, it must be tough enough keeping certain body parts tucked in that costume when you're just standing there, let alone when you're running, jumping, and fighting bad guys. Quite a feat. This book, like *Lady Death* and *Shi*, appeals to readers for obvious reasons, but then when the books sell out and cause a commotion, all the collectors hop aboard and drive the whole market crazy. The trick is to turn 'em all into fans and see if they'll stick around for future issues.

9

™ & © Wildstorm Productions DBA Aegis Entertainment

Gen[13] #2
Artist: J. Scott Campbell
Writer: Brandon Choi

This was an extremely hyped book—ads began appearing as early as last spring—but the project was rescheduled for a later release. A four-page teaser for the book was featured in *Wizard* #30, an exclusive *Gen[13]* #1/2 issue was offered by *Wizard*, and then the final project was handled rather well. It was drawn very nicely, it had a decent storyline and decent script, and fans were really taken by the characters, a band of superpowered youths on the run from a bunch of bent scientists. Pretty good stuff, and very under-ordered by retailers. With *Gen[13]* #1 clocking in at No. 4, #2 at No. 9, and the subsequent issues also doing fairly well, Image has a definite winner on its hands with this baby. (And if that didn't sell ya, there's a whole bunch of scantily clad babes in here as well!)

10

™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Marvels #2
Artist: Alex Ross
Writer: Kurt Busiek

Ah...finally, a book that doesn't have any scantily clad anything in it or any sort of weird variant gimmick. *Marvels*, the four-issue series that chronicled the birth of the Marvel Universe, did well for one reason: it was good. While fewer and fewer comics every month can lay claim to being a good book, *Marvels* stood up and smacked everyone in their faces with its fantastic storytelling and breathtaking art. The subject matter, the Silver Age Marvel Universe, was certainly an asset, but in a day and age when creators seem to have forgotten how to do comics, Busiek and Ross whipped butt! What made this a semitough-to-find book was its $5.95 cover price (worth every penny) and the fact that retailers, as a rule, cut back on their orders for a #2 issue of anything. Ooops. ☆

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THE BEST PRICE GUIDE IN THE
INDUSTRY

Wizard Market WATCH

by **Jon Warren**

Supply & Demand

Trends have a way of taking shape during the summer, partly because of the big conventions that are held each year. Millions of dollars change hands at shows like the annual San Diego Comic Con. These big shows are like a microeconomy, helping establish prices in the comics market.

The *Wizard* Price Guide editors keep up with the ever-changing comics market by attending these shows, talking to collectors and dealers, and meeting with our many *Wizard* VIPs and networkers. All this is part of our ongoing efforts to bring you the best price guide in the hobby.

RECENT (1991-1993)

The deluge of comics—over 1,100 are published monthly—has created a supply and demand phenomenon that is worthy of note here. Retailers are gun-shy, underordering new releases to insure that they don't get stuck with unsold books. This has created some low supply/high demand situations on certain titles with very limited print runs, like *Lady Death* #1, *Bone*, and *Vengeance of Vampirella* #1. These low print runs are in effect low supplies. Publishers only print what comic book stores order, so when collectors want more than what a store has, prices escalate, because store owners usually pay more to restock books than they do to stock them in the first place.

If the publishing glut continues to cause retailers to be conservative, more books will come under this supply/demand effect. One of the best ways to avoid having to pay over cover price for new releases is to ask your store to start a folder for you. By ordering in advance, you can insure that your retailer will hold the book for you when it's released. If your retailer doesn't have an official stocking service, maybe (s)he can personally save books for you.

MARVEL

The mutant titles—*X-Men*, *Uncanny X-Men*, *X-Factor*, *X-Men Unlimited*, et cetera—are, as always, the most popular of the current Marvel titles. As always, any Marvel book with the letter "X" featured prominently on the cover is selling very well. Television exposure has helped the main X-books and two other titles, *Gambit* and *X-Men Adventures*, to be among the best sellers for Marvel.

Thanks to the popularity of the television series, *Beavis & Butt-Head* continues to ring up sales, but at a slightly slower rate than expected. It appears that B & B fans have lukewarm feelings about the translation of the show to comic book form, but many people are still picking up copies.

DC

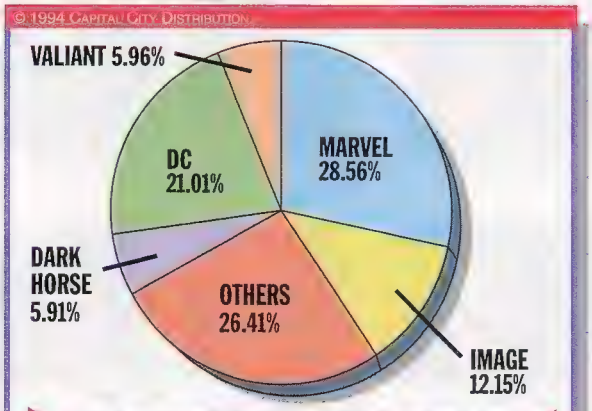
Batman/Spawn and *Superman/Doomsday* #1 sold out faster than expected; fans apparently weren't turned off by the $5 cover prices. However, they seem to have been disappointed with the storyline in *Batman/Spawn*. The Supes book, however, went over very well with readers, especially people who followed the enormously successful death of Superman story.

Green Lantern is a best seller for DC, especially issue #51, which introduces Green Lantern's new duds, created by the new GL, Kyle Rayner, himself. Kyle is apparently a hit with readers of all ages.

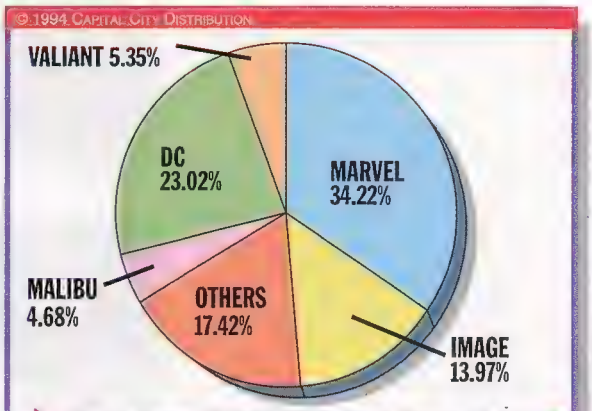
DC followers are waiting breathlessly for this summer's "Zero Hour" storyline, and are looking out for any connections to it in DC's recent books.

IMAGE

Prophet #4A, the issue with the



Dollar Share of the Comic Book Market for MAY, according to Capital City Distribution



Piece Share of the Comic Book Market for MAY, according to Capital City Distribution

Stephen Platt cover and extremely low print run, is one of the hottest books for Image, followed closely by *Prophet* #5, which is slightly less hot because retailers and collectors alike were ready for it. *Supreme* #12, also with a Platt cover, is drawing the attention of collectors. *Gen*[13] is hot, with #1 selling briskly nationwide; it's very hard to find. *Spawn/Batman* is selling fairly well, according to retailers, but its readers aren't much happier with this book than with DC's side of the crossover.

VALIANT

Ninjak is still tops at Valiant. Mark Moretti's writing and art is excellent and is being noticed more and more by comic fans. Collectors are looking forward to the upcoming "Chaos Effect" mega-adventure; the many anticipated changes in the Valiant Universe has them waiting excitedly for the books with the most Earth-shaking events.

OTHER COMPANIES

Cartoon Books: *Bone* continues to be a huge success. Collectors seem to be ravenous for this small press title by Jeff Smith. The stories are excellent, and the artwork, especially the inks, is reminiscent of Walt Kelly, only better. The *Bone Flip-Book* just hit the market; limited to a print run of only 10,000 copies, it was, of course, an immediate nationwide sell-out. Find one if you can.

Chaos! Comics: The *Lady Death* mini-series is still blazing, with prices as high as $45 for issue #1. Our current *Wizard* price reflects the national average.

MODERN AGE (1970-1990)

DC

We continue to see strong collector demand for early issues of *Sandman* (vol. 2), particularly #1 and #8 (the first appearance of Death). Price Guide Headquarters received a verified report of a mint copy of *Sandman* #1 selling for $60, an indication of the continuing demand for this series. Thanks to consistent story quality and an expanding adult reader base, this title has been one of DC's most successful books of the past decade.

MARVEL

X-Men (vol. 1) #94-#143, especially the Claremont/Byrne issues (#108-#143), and *Giant-Size X-Men* #1 have been hot recently. One VIP reported selling a *Giant-Size* #1 (the first appearance of the new X-Men) for $260 immediately after placing it on sale.

Uncanny X-Men #266, the first appearance of the ever-popular Gambit, is a blazing-hot issue, fetching $30 to $40, depending on locale. Fans just can't get enough of Mr. LeBeau.

Wolverine back issues, both the regular series and the mini-series, are on the move, with recent price quotes in the $35-$40 range for issue #1 of the mini-series.

All *Star Wars* comics are red-hot, probably fueled by anticipation of the upcoming films. These books have been hot for at least a year now.

Demand for *Daredevil* #168, the first appearance of Elektra by Frank Miller, has been on the move. The main reason is that Elektra is back in the steadily popular DD mythos, and interest in her is building. Our VIPs have noted increased demand for key issues of all ages in top condition, and *DD* #168 is definitely a key issue.

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS

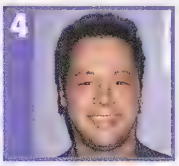
PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

1 **Todd McFarlane** *Spawn*

2 **Stephen Platt** *Prophet*

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

3 **Jim Lee** *WildC.A.T.s*



4 **Joe Quesada** Upcoming: *Ash*

PHOTO: LYNN VARIEY

5 **Frank Miller** Upcoming: *Sin City: The Big Fat Kill*

6 **Bart Sears** *Brute & Babe*

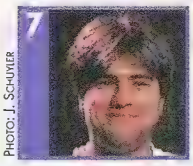


PHOTO: J. SCHUYLER

7 **Andy Kubert** *X-Men*

8 **Greg Capullo** *Violator*

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

9 **Marc Silvestri** *Cyberforce*

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

10 **Jeff Smith** *Bone*

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST WRITERS

PHOTO: LYNN VARIEY

1 **Frank Miller** Upcoming: *Sin City: The Big Fat Kill*

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

2 **Neil Gaiman** *Sandman*

3 **Peter David** *Hulk, Aquaman, Spider-Man 2099*

4 **John Byrne** *Next Men, Babe*

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

5 **Fabian Nicieza** *New Warriors, Nova, Night Thrasher*

PHOTO: MITCH JENKINS

6 **Alan Moore** *Violator*

7 **Chris Claremont** *Aliens vs. Predator: Deadliest of the Species*

PHOTO: J. SCHUYLER

8 **John Ostrander** *The Spectre*

9 **Ron Marz** *Green Lantern, Silver Surfer*

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

10 **Jeff Smith** *Bone*

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS AND WRITERS LISTS ARE DERIVED FROM A NATIONWIDE DEALER SURVEY.

OTHER COMPANIES

Vampirella by Warren Publications (the magazine-size series) is extremely hot, probably because of the success of the also very hot Harris comic series. The Warren series includes the first appearance of Vampirella in *Vampirella* #1.

SILVER AGE (1955-1969)

Demand for important Silver Age issues is as strong as ever.

Marvel collectors are seeking high grade copies of several early titles, including the presuperhero titles *Journey into Mystery*, *Strange Tales*, *Tales To Astonish*, *Tales of Suspense*, and *Marvel Tales*.

Amazing Adventures #1, the first appearance of the first Silver Age Marvel superhero (Dr. Droom), continues to move up in interest and price. Collectors are seemingly willing to pay any price for this early issue because it predates *Fantastic Four* #1 and *Amazing Fantasy* #15 and is extremely scarce, especially in grades above VF. Many collectors feel that this book is currently undervalued and unrecognized as a landmark issue.

Another early Marvel that's at the top of collectors' lists is *Amazing Adult Fantasy* #14. This issue, cover dated July 1962, features a Professor X prototype named Ozarr the Mighty, and it's the issue immediately preceding *Amazing Fantasy* #15, which, of course, is the book that introduced the Amazing Spider-Man to the world for the very first time.

At DC, collectors are seeking key superhero as well as horror and science fiction titles. High profile (read: high demand) issues from these titles include *Strange Adventures* #9, the first appearance of Captain Comet, a present L.E.G.I.O.N. member; *Mystery in Space* #53 (the Adam Strange story series begins with this issue); *House of Secrets* #92, the origin and first appearance of the Swamp Thing (beautifully rendered by Berni Wrightson); and *House of Mystery* #1, one of the scarcest of the '50s DCs.

GOLDEN AGE (1930-1954)

Demand for Golden Age era comics, particularly superhero issues published by Marvel (Timely) and DC, continues to be strong. Collectors are also seeking superhero titles published by Fawcett, including *Captain Marvel Adventures*, *Captain Marvel, Jr.*, *Spy Smasher*, and *Captain Midnight*, thanks in part to the interest generated by Jerry Ordway's recent DC hardcover, *The Power of Shazam!* ☆

Market WATCHERS

Here's *Wizard*'s "other" letter column, which features letters by comic collectors about (what else?) comic collecting! Take it away, people!

Dear Wizard,

I want to question you on why you don't print the prices of early comic book issues. For example, on *Superman* (vol. 1), you don't print prices on books earlier than the 100th issue. Can you give me a reason?

Rory Tennet
Richmond, TX

The *Wizard* Comic Book Price Guide specializes in Silver Age and Modern Age books. Books from the Golden Age, which lasted from 1938 to about 1954, are bought and sold through a market vastly different from those of the other ages, and we choose to devote our time and space to watching the Silver and Modern Age markets. However, something cool concerning all three ages is in the works here at *Wizard*, so hang in there!

Dear Market Watchers,

Did you know that *Swamp Thing* (vol. 2) #84 contains a Sandman appearance? Knowing Sandman's popularity these days, shouldn't your $2.00 value be much higher?

David Garcia
Oakland, CA

Yes, Morpheus made a brief but interesting appearance in that issue; this was a very early appearance that came just months after *Sandman* (vol. 2) #1 was released. However, even though the Master of Dreams is unbelievably popular, most people—both collectors and retailers—don't know about this book, and so there simply isn't much demand for it at this time. We are keeping the book at $2.00 now but are asking retailers if it actually has a higher market value. Keep watching the Guide and your local comic stores...this may very well become a hot book!

WIZARD!!!

I have an idea that'll blow the socks right off Snoop Cheesy-Cheese and all the wonderful editors at *Wizard*. Why not have a section just for prices of autographed comics?!? Isn't that a wonderful idea?!

Mike Lowery
Upper Marlboro, MD

It's a fine idea, one we've been considering for a while now, but it's difficult to do because of the enormous number of signed editions out there; it would take a ton of time and energy to amass accurate pricing data. We're talking books signed by writers, pencilers, inkers, writers and pencilers, writers and inkers... Also, the randomness of the values assigned to signed books by retailers makes this cliff an even tougher climb.

Dear Wizard,

I just recently started buying Marvel trading cards (X-Men series 1, to be specific). I looked into the Card Price Guide in issue #34, and I was shocked to find that the prices for some of the cards were missing! For example, the card listing went from #3 to #6. What happened to #4 and #5? Why is this?

Ryan Ochinero
Salinas, CA

Oh no—another restless card collector. Take a deep breath, exhale, and listen: starting with issue #34, the Card Price Guide has changed its format for extended set listings. We will now list a price range for common cards (otherwise known as singles) as well as the prices of hot singles (single cards that are more valuable and sought-after than other commons). Why? This saves space, allowing us to fill the Guide with more and more information. So there's no reason to be "verklempt"—go rest yourself, bubbalah.

Dear Wizard,

Recently, I was going through one of my older boxes of comics when I came across a DC comic by the name of *Plop*. It's #18, published in 1975. Could you possibly help me out with

Continued thataway

the price? Thanks a lot.

James Reichl
East Hampton, NY

According to our Senior Price Guide Editor Jon Warren, this fairly obscure book is only worth about two dollars, but the 24-issue series itself, published between 1973 and 1976, is worth looking into because of its wild Basil Wolverton covers and Sergio Aragones interiors. This was definitely one of DC's weirdest books, for those of you who are into that stuff.

Dear Market Watchers,

In *Wizard* #34, David Baxter made a comment about keeping polybagged comics in the polybag as long as you cut it evenly on top. You responded by saying, "Unfortunately...it seems that when a comic book is taken out of its bag, it's considered a damaged book."

To true "Watchers," this would be a mistake! Who cares if people don't want your comic if it's out of the bag. Take it out! Let it breathe! Put it in a Mylite with an acid-free backboard. If it comes with, for example, an animation cel, put it with the comic. If it comes with a card, put it in a snaptight card holder, marking on the holder which comic it belongs to. When you sell the comic, include the card.

Polybags will turn your pages yellow quicker because they have chemicals which make the comic deteriorate in time. Then when everyone who saved their book in the polybag will have an unwanted item, yours will be sought after.

Think ahead, and be logical, not irrational. Spend the extra pennies, and save the dollars. MYLITE 'EM!

Pompeo Balbo
Scottsdale, AZ

Whoo-eee, a mini-controversy. Sort of. That's our second "take it out" Market Watcher, and he made a very good point: polybooks will eventually turn to dust in their plastic "graves." So are there any pro-polybag people out there? Let us know!

This "episode" of Market Watchers is nearing its end, so I just wanted to give a few hints to those new comic collectors out there, many of which have written me letters asking for some advice (I'll try to reply personally to each of you, by the way).

• Challenge yourself: buy a recent issue of a cool-looking series that's new to you. If the title interests you, start trying to collect the whole run! Start with a title that's up to between 25 and 50 issues, to make it easy on yourself.

• "I'm collecting comics for fun, not just money." Keep that simple but important thought in your mind, especially when you're tempted to use most of your wallet's contents to purchase what you hear is "the next *Moon Knight* #55." If you spend too much time and money chasing after every single "hot" book out there, you might just miss out on the joys of collecting, including reading quality stuff that can enrich your mind, not just your bank account.

• Meet your fellow comic lovers. One of the best ways to encounter people who share your interests is to go to where they converge: comic stores and conventions. It's truly fun to talk with a fellow Nightwing fan or Chris Claremont follower. And don't forget: *Wizard* has a pen pal section in our Magic Words department. Get to know your fellow fans!

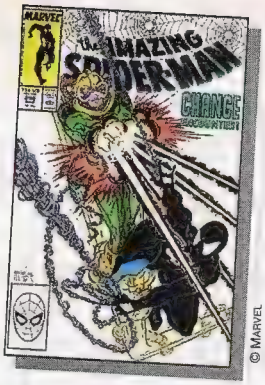
Good luck with collecting, guys and gals; see you in 30!

—Marc Wilkofsky

WiN!

Amazing Spider-Man #298

Amazing Spider-Man #298, the cameo first appearance of Venom and the first Todd McFarlane issue!



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Missing Link

Here's the deal: every month we'll list three comic book issues that contain something in common, in terms of content, characters, creators, or the like. Your job is to tell us what that something is.

For example, what do *Uncanny X-Men* #144, *Marvel Team-Up* #122, and *She-Hulk* (vol. 2) #8 all have in common? That's easy: all three feature guest appearances by the Man-Thing.

Get the idea? Of course, we won't make each contest *that* easy. You'll usually have to read through the books to find the answers.

We'll randomly select an entry out of all the correct ones we receive. The winner of this month's contest will receive an *Amazing Spider-Man* #298!

Here's this month's batch o' books:

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Amazing Spider-Man #42

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Avengers #75

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Uncanny X-Men #168

Send all entries to:
Missing Link #36
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064
All entries must be received by August 26, 1994.

If you can read this fine print, then you're in.

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, their immediate families, and Wendy from Snapple. Print your name, age, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the Missing Link on a three-by-five-inch index card or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry to Missing Link #36, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. Limit one entry per envelope. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become the property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winner. No cash equivalent or substitute prize is offered. The prize will be awarded in the name of the contest winner and is not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. Thor says, "Thou must read all three books, or thou will receive a Mjolnir enema most verily." **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by August 26, 1994.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winner will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on August 29, 1994, by Wizard Press. All decisions are final.

For the name of the winner, available after September 30, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Missing Link #36 Winner, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just watch this column!

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E.G.O.*

A Conventional Method

by Todd McFarlane

In this month's column, I'm turning to comic readers everywhere to help me out with a problem that I've had for the last three or four years. Every time I go to a convention, I have a set way of trying to autograph items for as many people as possible. But there's always a very vocal minority that's unhappy with my system.

What I'm going to do here is create a contest. I'll give away some Spawn knickknacks to the grand prize (and only) winner: signed comics, some hard-to-find Hot Wheels Spawnmobiles, and other assorted goodies. How do you win? Well, first I'll explain how I do a convention and why I do it that way. Then I want you to let me know how you would accommodate more fans, speed up the process, and make people a little bit happier.

My attitude has always been this: I'd rather give 100 people one autograph each instead of giving 10 people 10 autographs apiece, even though it adds up to the same number of autographs; I try to accommodate as many people who collect my work as possible. I have a system now where I can do 300 signatures an hour, and I usually sign for a minimum of seven hours. I neither break for lunch nor go to the bathroom; rarely do I even have a drink of water. I sign nonstop.

When I go to conventions, the promoter usually knows when I'm going to be at the show. I get the promoter to issue tickets numbered from 1 to 2,100, because 300 autographs an hour times seven hours equals 2,100 autographs, with each one going to a separate person. I never charge promoters for appearances or fans for signatures. Sometimes, though, when people pay an admission fee to attend a show where I'm signing, they believe that the admission fee is the cost of a ticket to receive my autograph. Those people don't realize that they have to pay an admission fee whether I attend a show or not.

After we give out the 2,100 tickets, we usually allow a maximum of 100 to 200 people to stand in line at any given time. If you have ticket No. 1,750, you probably won't get an autograph until about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, even if you enter the convention at 10 a.m. Why stand in line all day when you're guaranteed an autograph and a spot in line? In the meantime, you can go to the other tables, chat with other creators, buy some comic paraphernalia, soak up sun if it's a nice day, and then come back at around 3 o'clock when we call for the 1,700s to get on line.

The biggest problem with this system is that most people bring more than one item to sign because they're used to creators autographing a handful of books at a time. Unfortunately, I can't even sign two books per person! That would cut the number of people who could get autographs each day in half. Instead of 2,100 people receiving signatures, it would only amount to about 1,100.

Despite my efforts to satisfy as many people as possible, this process is unacceptable to some. Some still bellyache: "Why can't I get more than one autograph?" "Why do I have wait until my number's called?" "Why this?" "Why that?" So am I missing some revolutionary new way to accommodate more people? I hope someone out there who's been to a convention and has had to stand in line for a signature can figure out something I might be missing.

Again, my point is this: I am looking for the best way to accommodate the most people at a convention and keep them happy.

Jot down your suggestions legibly on lined paper or type them neatly (typed entries are preferred) and send them to:

E.G.O. Contest
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

Get your entries in by July 15, 1994. Good luck—I'm more than eager to hear what you have to say!

Legal stuff...

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press and Todd McFarlane, their immediate families, and that Malebolgia ruffian (not that we'd use his suggestions anyway). Print your name, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and how you think Todd can accommodate the most people at conventions. If handwritten, print your entry neatly on lined paper (typed entries are preferred). Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry to E.G.O. Contest, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. All entries become the property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winner. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the name of the contest winner and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. All entries must be received at contest headquarters by July 15, 1994. Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. The winning entriy will be chosen on July 22, 1994, by employees of Todd McFarlane. All decisions are final.

For the name of the winner, available after August 1, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to E.G.O. Contest Winner, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just keep reading *Wizard*!

Any industry professional who wishes to respond to the opinions stated here should write to: E.G.O., 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064.

*EVERYONE'S GOT OPINIONS

The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of *Wizard: The Guide to Comics*, its editorial staff, or Image Comics.

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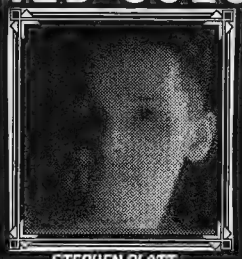
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SHOWS & CONVENTIONS

Welcome to the new *Wizard* Shows & Conventions! To help connect you with the biggest and best comic book shows and conventions in your area, *Wizard* is still printing all the stuff we used to print in this department. But we've added extra space so you can find out in advance about admission discounts, creator appearances, and other superneat stuff!

These listings are as accurate as we can get 'em, but *Wizard* always recommends phoning ahead before you attend an event—show information sometimes changes after we go to press. With that in mind, it's time for all you comic-hungry hordes to go conventioneering!

CALIFORNIA

TUESDAYS, THURSDAYS, SUNDAYS THROUGHOUT JULY, SANTA ANA

Comics, Sportscards & Milk Cap Show, Tabb Warehouse, 1928 E. Glenwood, free admission, Tuesdays and Thursdays: 5-10pm, Sundays: 10am-5pm, 714-854-1991. Directions: 55 freeway between 5/405, Exit 55 at Edinger, go left to Ritchey, go left to Glenwood, go left to 1928 E. Glenwood in Santa Ana. Free parking, free raffles, special promotions at each show, frequent guest appearances.

JULY 2-3, SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO

Super Comic/Toy Expo, Grosvenor Hotel, 380 S. Airport Blvd., 40 tables @ $55 each, $2 admission, 10am-4pm, 415-994-3967/415-333-8100. Power Ranger Costume Contest; Folly Klaas Foundation for Missing Children Charity Auction (including original art and premium items); *NBA Jam Team Tournament* Video Game Contest. Door prizes every 15 minutes, including the rare Iceman action figure, Spawn mobile, the Dragonzord/Power Ranger figure, and many signed and gold books.

FLORIDA

JULY 9, DAYTONA BEACH

Daytona Con, 900 S. Atlantic Ave., 80 tables @ $50 each, $5 admission, 9am-6pm, 904-672-7539. Guests: Norm Breyfogle, Jeff Whiting, John Beatty, Ken Mitchroney, Rik Levins, Mike Kazaleh.

JULY 10, TAMPA

Comic Book Mega-Show II, Colony Hotel (formerly Ramada), 820 E. Busch Blvd. & I-27, 60 tables @ $50 each, $3 admission, 10am-4:30pm, 407-426-7745. Signer: William Tucci of *Shi*. Gold edition comic book door prizes. Thousands of Golden Age, Silver Age, and Modern Age comics.

JULY 24, ORLANDO

Comic Book Mega-Show IV, Marriott Hotel, 8001 International Dr., 60 tables @ $50 each, $3 admission, 10am-5pm, 407-426-7745. Guest signer: Colleen Doran of *A Distant Soil, Valor, Sandman, Amazing Spider-Man, X-Factor,* and *Beauty and the Beast*. Gold edition comic book door prizes. Thousands of Golden Age, Silver Age, and Modern Age comics. Other signers to be announced.

ILLINOIS

JULY 17, ROSEMONT

Sports Memorabilia Card & Comic, Rosemont Horizon, Skyline Room, 6920 N. Mannheim on Lunt Ave., tables $45 each, $2 admission, 9:30am-3:30pm, 708-663-1975.

INDIANA

JULY 9-10, INDIANAPOLIS

Hoosier Comic Con '94, Quality Inn East, 3525 N. Shadeland Ave., 100 tables @ $50 each, $1 admission (children under 13 free), 10am-4pm, 317-841-9204.

KENTUCKY

JULY 24, ASHLAND

River Cities Comic Con, Elk's Hall, 900 Carter Ave. (downtown Ashland), 34 eight-foot tables @ $40 each, $2 admission, 10am-4pm, 216-499-6056.

MARYLAND

JULY 8-10 & 29-31, OCEAN CITY

E.T. Collectables Hobby Show, Convention Center, 100 tables @ $100 each, $3/day or $5/3 days admission, 11am-8pm, 301-733-2266/304-263-2863.

MASSACHUSETTS

JULY 10, WOBURN

Comics & Card Show, Ramada Hotel (Exit 35 off Rte. 128), 45 tables @ $50 each, $2 admission (children under 16 free), 11am-4pm, 617-596-3336. Gift certificate raffles: two $100 and four $50 raffles.

NEW JERSEY

JULY 2-4, WILDWOOD

Wildwood Comic Book & Sports Card Expo, Convention Center, 125 tables @ $160 each, $3 admission, Saturday and Sunday: noon-9pm, Monday: 10am-4pm, 609-448-7585. Guests: Adam Kubert (artist on *Wolverine*), Paul Pelletier (artist on *Outsiders*), Ron Fortier (writer on *Green Hornet* and *Totem*), Alpha Productions, *Triton* Magazine, Dominic Roussel (Flyers goalie), and Bernie Parent (Hall of Fame goalie).

JULY 30, WOODBRIDGE

Comic Book & Comic Art Convention, Sheraton Hotel, 515 Rte. 1 S. (across from the Woodbridge Mall), 40 tables @ $55 each, $3 admission, 10am-4pm, 908-828-5955. Guests: Lee Weeks (*Gambit*) and Louis Small Jr. (*Ninjak*).

JULY 31, BORDENTOWN

Comic Book & Comic Art Convention, Days Inn Hotel, Rte. 206 N. off Exit 7 of the New Jersey Turnpike, 30 tables @ $55 each, $3 admission, 10am-4pm, 908-828-5955. Guests: Louis Small Jr. (*Ninjak*), Mark McKenna (*The Punisher*), and Tom McCraw (*Legion of Super-Heroes*).

NEW YORK

JULY 3, NEW YORK CITY

Comic Book Extravaganza, Marriott East, 525 Lexington Ave. & 49th St., 63 tables @ $95 each, $3 admission (children under 6 free), 10am-4pm, 718-441-9868. 50¢ off admission with this *Wizard* ad! The great tradition returns! With more comic premiums, more promos, and more giveaways!!

OHIO

JULY 17, AKRON

Akron-Canton Comic Con, Holiday Inn, I-77 at Exit 120 (Arlington Rd.), 40 six-foot tables @ $55

each, $3 admission, 10am-4pm, 216-499-6056.

OKLAHOMA

JULY 16, TULSA

Tulsa Summer Con, Holiday Inn, 1010 North Garnett Rd. & I-244, 50 tables @ $45 each, $1 admission, 10am-6pm, 918-652-7293 (call for room rates at the Holiday Inn). Guest: Steve Englehart (*Strangers, The Night Man*)

OREGON

JULY 22-24, BEAVERTON

Beaverton Mall Card & Comic Show, Beaverton Mall, 3275 S.W. Cedar Hills Blvd., 60 tables @ $110 each (for all three days), free admission, Friday: 10am-9pm, Saturday: 10am-7pm, Sunday: 11am-5pm, 503-526-9655.

PENNSYLVANIA

JULY 24, GETTYSBURG

Gettysburg Comicon, Ramada Inn, 35 tables @ $90 each, $5 adult admission ($3 kids under 10), 9am-5pm, 717-267-1510. Guest: Spider-Man artist to be announced.

TEXAS

JULY 9, HOUSTON

Comic Carnival, Days Inn Houston/Clear Lake, across from Johnson Space Center, 45 tables @ $75 each, $3 admission, 10:30am-4pm, 713-659-1210. Call for guest information.

JULY 9, HOUSTON

Comic & Card Convention, Holiday Inn S.W., 11160 S.W. Freeway & Beltway 8, 35 tables @ $65 each, $2 admission, 10am-5pm, 713-293-8676.

JULY 10, BEAUMONT

Comic & Card Convention, Holiday Inn Beaumont Plaza, 3950 I-10 (Walden exit), 35 tables @ $40 each, $1 admission, 10am-5pm, 713-293-8676.

JULY 17, AUSTIN

Comic & Card Convention, Double Tree Hotel, 6505 N. I-H35, 50 tables @ $55 each, $2 admission, 10am-5pm, 713-293-8676.

JULY 17, HOUSTON

Comic & Card Convention, Marriott Westside, 13210 Katy Freeway (Eldridge exit), 45 tables @ $65 each, $2 admission, 10am-5pm, 713-293-8676.

JULY 24, CORPUS CHRISTI

Comic & Card Convention, Holiday Inn Emerald Beach, 1102 S. Shoreline, 45 tables @ $45 each, $1.50 admission, 10am-5pm, 713-293-8676.

JULY 24, HOUSTON

Comic & Card Convention, Marriott North at Greenspoint, 255 N. Sam Houston Parkway E., 50 tables @ $70 each, $2 admission, 10am-5pm, 713-293-8676.

JULY 31, SAN ANTONIO

Comic & Card Convention, Wyndham Hotel, I-10 & Wurzbach, 45 tables @ $55 each, $1 admission, 10am-5pm, 713-293-8676. ☆

If you'd like to use *Wizard*'s magic to help advertise your comic book event, call Karen Evora at (914) 268-3907.

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WizaRd BulPen

Queen of Wizard: As reported last issue, *Wizard* Editor Pat McCallum, Research Assistant Dan Reilly, and *ER* Art Director Robin "Jamos" Ramos all took part in the Jelly Gauntlet, in which each of the participants attempted to outdo the others in a weight-loss competition. Whoever lost the most weight received a free lunch at Taco Bell courtesy of the losers, while he who lost the least amount had to work a full day...as a woman. So who won? Reilly swept it with 13 fewer pounds under his belt, while McCallum clocked in only 11 pounds lighter, earning him a full day of work in drag. With chin held high, McCallum worked a full day looking...well, like this...

P-A-R-T-Y: Roommates Matt Tierney and Brad Fountain (*Wizard* and *Sportslook*'s art directors, respectively) held a bash at their posh digs in Rye, N.Y., to welcome aboard their third roomie, *Sportslook* designer Steve Blackwell. Highlights of the evening included a tipsy Marc "Crazy Legs" Wilkofsky dancing the night away with a six-foot Godzilla blow-up doll and Tierney's 19-pound cat Dusty just lying there. A game of "Count the Passed-Out Staffers" rounded out the evening.

Our softball season got under way as the crack Wizard Press team won their first game of the season, 23-17, against the sporting Comics Unlimited Distributors of Staten Island. A rematch is being scheduled. Watch this space for further details on Wizard's diamond exploits as the summer months go by! (Still no sign of Valiant.)

Semihidden photo of McCallum taken while he was trying to book a spot on *Oprah*'s "cross-dressing porky editors and the cattle who love them" show.

UP CLOSE...

Marc Wilkofsky
Contributing Editor, *Wizard: The Guide To Comics*

What is it you do at *Wizard*?
I proofread every single piece of text that goes into *Wizard*, contribute article ideas, and inform people of happenings in the entertainment world.

Your favorite section in *Wizard*?
Cut & Print.

Last good movie you saw?
Four Weddings and a Funeral.

Last good book you read?
The House of the Spirits, by Isabel Allende.

Favorite TV show?
Guiding Light!

Favorite musical group?
R.E.M., definitely. (And I love Mary-Chapin Carpenter.)

Who would play you in a movie?
Dean Cain.

Favorite comic right now?
Animal Man.

Favorite comics of all time?
The *Crisis on Infinite Earths* series!

What are/were your nicknames?
Wojo, Slackoffsky, Yeesh-Man.

What superpower would you want, and why?
I think it would be cool to have a mutant healing factor (people who know me know why).

ILLUSTRATION: DAVID PRAGER

✓ **COLLECTOR'S SPORTSLOOK #10** The AA Birmingham Barons's new sensation, Michael Jordan, graces the cover of *Collector's Sportslook* as we take a look at how Michael's making the change from NBA superstar to baseball farmhand. In addition, our writers spend a day in the life of a big-league player (Randy Johnson), see what Boston Red Sox Hall of Famer Ted Williams is up to these days, and offer yet another clue to just who our mystery columnist, the Invisible Man, actually was when he was visible. **$3.95**

✓ **ER #11** The X-Men's favorite card-throwing mutant, Gambit, jumps onto the June cover of *Entertainment Retailing* from his own Fleer Flair Marvel Universe trading card. Inside this issue, the future of Defiant Comics is explored, the spotlight shines on SkyBox's Frank O'Connell, and retailers are told how to get coin-operated video games into their stores. John Byrne and Beau Smith return with their own special view on the industry and we take a look at the Terrible Twos: why #2 issues are so hard to find. **$2.95**

WIZARD: THE GUIDE TO COMICS VOLUME ONE, THIRTY-SIX (36), AUGUST 1994.
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WIZARD Profile

Here's looking at...GERARD JONES

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Writer Gerard Jones's work is powered by a flair for action sequences balanced with characterization. The combination places him at the top of his craft.

Born in Montana, the 36-year-old Jones has lived most of his life in the San Francisco Bay area. Although he collected comics as a teen, he grew out of them for a spell. But while working at a used bookstore that carried old comics, Jones, then in his early 20s, decided to catch up on the adventures of the heroes he'd left behind as a teen.

That used bookstore was also where he met his future writing partner, Will Jacobs. *The Comic Book Heroes*, one of many collaborations between Jacobs and Jones, helped launch Jones's comics career: he made his first contacts in the industry by researching and conducting interviews for the history-spanning book.

Jones's first published comics work was the creator-owned *The Trouble With Girls* #1, co-written with Jacobs and drawn by Tim Hamilton, which Malibu Comics published in August 1987. (Jones and Jacobs have since scripted a *Trouble With Girls* pilot for a TV series being developed by HBO.) Jones went on to celebrated solo stints on Marvel's *Wonder Man* and DC's *Justice League Europe*, *Green Lantern*, and *El Diablo*.

His current plate is a full one, partly because Jones is one of eight "founding fathers" of Malibu's Ultraverse line of comics, which debuted in the summer of 1993. Jones co-writes *Prime* with Len Strazewski and solos on *Freex*, *Solitaire*, and the new *Ultra-Force*. His upcoming projects include Marvel's *Hulk 2099*, due out later this year, and, starting in August, the revamped *Justice League America*, for which Jones intends to revive the lightheartedness that Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis once brought to the title. Jones's team will consist of Wonder Woman, Flash, Hawkman, Obsidian, Fire, Metamorpho, Crimson Fox, and Nuklon.

Jones, who cites comics creators Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, and John Broome as influences on his work, actually set out to write novels, not comics. In 1983, he co-wrote *The Beaver Papers* with Jacobs; he says it's "a combined satire of old sitcoms and high literature." Two years later, Jones and Jacobs wrote *The Comic Book Heroes*. In 1992, Jones wrote *Honey, I'm Home*, another nonfiction book about old black-and-white TV sitcoms.

"Comics, to me, are a transitional thing," he says when asked about having a life beyond comics. "I like them a lot, and I don't know if I would ever leave them. But I've always set out to be a novelist. I don't want to abandon [that type of] fiction completely. I'd like to go back to that someday."

First comic book read...
It was an issue of *Detective Comics* where Batman and Robin go into the past and fight Egyptians.

Favorite comic of all time...
Uncle Scrooge #17 by Carl Barks. It struck me as a perfect blend of atmosphere, character, adventure, and humor.

Favorite work of your own...
The entire first run of *The Trouble With Girls*.

Comics you currently read...
Hate, *Flash*, all the Ultraverse stuff, and occasionally the X-Men books.

Person you'd most like to meet...
As corny as it sounds, Jesus Christ, just to find out what the truth is. Nobody else knows, and I'd like to know what really went on back then.

Superpower you'd most like to have...
I want to fly. I get tired of gravity and the constraints of being pulled down to Earth.

Favorite munchie at 2 a.m....
Cinnamon toast.

Favorite pastime or hobby...
Watching old black-and-white movies.

Favorite television shows...
Sgt. Bilko, *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, and *The Andy Griffith Show*.

The last time you went trick-or-treating you went as...
A squid. I was probably 11 years old.

Person who would play you in a movie about yourself...
Peter David thinks Ed Begley Jr.; I think a young Dick Van Dyke.

Favorite cartoon...
Bugs Bunny cartoons from the '40s.

People you'd most like to work with...
Bret Blevins, Barry Kitson, and David Williams.

Favorite musical performer...
Charlie Parker.

Why do you read *Wizard*?
It's a pretty solid guide to what's going on. ☆

LOOK WHO'S JUST BEAMED UP FROM THE SEWER.

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